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THE ACADEMY

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, SCIENCE & ART

No. 1883

JUNE 6, 1908

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LIFE AND LETTERS

We note with the deepest regret that Marlborough House continues to permit itself to be used as a stalking-horse for the noble house of Harmsworth. In the *Daily Mail* of Saturday last there appeared a large advertisement of the "Children's Encyclopædia," wherein we were assured that:

The welcome accorded to the "Children's Encyclopædia" by the Royal Children at Marlborough House is echoed in every home in the land where the future of the children is valued at more than ½d. a day.

We have been at the trouble to make search among the advertisements of the more reputable patent medicine vendors, and we fail to find there the smallest suggestion of recommendation from Marlborough House. Of course this is as it should be. For what reasons other, perhaps, than those of charity Marlborough House should go out of its way to help Carmelite House to sevenpences over a work which it is charitable to liken to a patent medicine passes our comprehension. We do not suppose for a moment that Marlborough House has knowledge of the flagrant manner in which its good name is being exploited by the publishers of this so-called encyclopædia. We have already expressed our opinion as to the value of the first number of the work. The sixth number—which is before us—bears evidence of much more careful editing than was bestowed upon No. 1. But the trail of the Carmelite is still over it all. And we are of opinion that a child had almost as well remain ignorant as derive its knowledge from such a quarter. In any case it is pathetic to imagine that the "Royal Children" are so put to it for suitable educational facilities that they must needs be brought up on a publication of this sort. And, in spite of Carmelite House's assertion to the contrary, we believe that it is precisely in those homes in the land where the future of the children is valued at more than a ½d. a day that the "Children's Encyclopædia" will in no circumstances be found.

Meanwhile it may be profitable for us to glance at the kind of fare which is being provided by the Harmsworths for households in which the future of the children is valued at not more than the aforesaid ½d. per day. For a penny, that is to say two days' future money, we have purchased *Puck*, "the new coloured humorous paper," which, however, happens to be in its eighth volume and its 202nd

issue. It is a journal intended for children who can read, and no doubt Carmelite House intends it as a sort of finishing course after the Encyclopædia. We are not aware that *Puck* has been welcomed by the Royal children. In any case we can describe it only as an exceedingly vulgar publication containing a number of brutally ugly pictures and much foolish and futile writing. The Editor's view of what is suitable for the entertainment of children may be judged from the appended legend which appears under quite stupid drawings. (1) "'Jilted for a silly-looking soldier like Tommy Atkins,' said Jack Tar. 'Ah, ah! My heart is broken. I must win her back, my little Dolly Dimple!'" (2) So Jack Tar mounted the sink and turned the tap on. 'Oh, horror!' gasped Dolly Dimple. 'I shall get my new frock wet, and mamma told me to be so careful.'" (3) Then Jack Tar came along on the toy ark and rescued Dolly, but left Tommy food for the tiddlers." In another place we read, "Prythee, fayre lady, wilt thou permit me to take thine arm and arouse pangs of jealousy in the bosom of yonder wench? She has turned a deaf ear to the pipings of her faithful swain." And the whole letterpress is sprinkled with "Tee-hees," "Tee-hee-hoos," "Dot him one," "Hellup," "Great Grape-nuts," and similar exclamatory elegances.

It is to be presumed that in homes where the future of the children is valued at more than a ½d. a day *Puck* could not possibly enter. On the other hand, we know that the heart of childhood is desperately inclined to the prohibited article, and literary and artistic contraband is its especial delight. The Carmelite House authorities recognise this fault in the otherwise sweet nature of the immature, and naturally they must pander to it and make money out of it. If the politicians who were so zealous to abolish religious instruction from our State schools, and who are so careful of the childhood of the country that they will not allow a small boy to fetch a pint of beer for his father's dinner were to bring in a Bill to prohibit the sale and circulation of nefarious journals for children they would be rendering the country something of a service. Carmelite House issues a journal of the *Puck* order on each day of the week with the exception of Sunday. We have no hesitation in asserting that any child who gets hold of these journals is more than likely to be deeply injured by them, and that in the main they seem conceived utterly to stultify the real purposes of education, whether secular or otherwise. The brains of the country are of quite as much importance to it as its brawn and health. *Puck* and similar organs may be depended upon to fribble away the wits of childhood, and to weaken both the intellect and the character. Persons engaged in such an undesirable work are a good deal more dangerous to the State than the next burglar.

With reference to a letter on the subject of Christianity and Socialism which we print in our Correspondence columns, we are sorry to have to contradict Mr. Paine quite flatly on a point of fact. The vast majority of Socialists are atheists and Freethinkers, and the destruction of Christianity is one of the avowed aims of the vast majority of Socialists. Let Mr. Paine read Bax's "Religion of Socialism," let him study the "Socialist Catechism," and the "Red Catechism" taught in Socialist Sunday-schools. We will undertake that his eyes will be opened. It is quite true that the particular branch of Socialist propaganda with which Mr. Paine is associated is Christian. We refer of course to the Christian Social Union. The members of that Union are a small minority of Socialists; they are estimable people for whom we have respect, but while they fondly imagine that they are leavening the big lump of wickedness which is called Socialism they are in reality being made the tools of unscrupulous men. The whole trend of Socialism, not only in England, but in France, in Italy, and in Spain, is, and always has been, violently anti-Christian. As to the "scheme for taking land and capital out of private hands and transferring it to

the public," it has been examined and exhaustively discussed by the ablest intellects of our times. It has been proved conclusively to be a false and mischievous fallacy. Intellectually it is as disreputable as the theory that the earth is flat. Mr. Mallock has pulverised it in "A Critical Examination of Socialism," and we can also refer Mr. Paine and others concerned to Mr. J. Ellis Barker's "British Socialism," and Mr. Arnold-Forster's "English Socialism of To-day," books all recently reviewed in THE ACADEMY. The subject is almost as old as the hills, and we are merely mentioning the most recent and modern exposures of Socialism.

The *Observer*, commenting on the oddities of the Pekin Board of Astronomy, which explains an epidemic of fires by a supposed descent of the God of Fire on earth, and beats tom-toms at an eclipse to scare away the dragon which is about to swallow up the sun or the moon, says:

It is not necessary to think that they really believe in the dragon, any more than that the students of the Middle Ages were really engaged in the quest of the Philosopher's Stone.

The *Observer* implies, evidently, that the quest of the Philosopher's Stone was a crazy and chimerical pursuit. But why? The writer has advanced beyond the old stage of thought which seemed to believe that everybody who lived in the Middle Ages was mad, or bad, or stupid—or all three at once; and one cannot but be grateful that this pestilent nonsense about the most wonderful period in human history is getting less common of utterance. But the assumption that there is some radical absurdity in the theory of alchemy is quite curious; the fact being that the alchemists were, theoretically, in advance of all but the most modern science. It is doubtful, indeed, whether modern science has even yet taken up its stand firmly on the ground that they occupied by ancient right.

Ten years ago—five years ago, perhaps—the student of chemistry would have been taught the doctrine of primitive and immutable elements, and, gold being such an element, it was clear that people who sought the art of making gold were idiots. But this doctrine is now an obsolete heresy; the *mutatio rerum* is a firmly-established truth; the electron, or force taking shape in many substances, has replaced the old "elemental" theory. It is curious to note, by the way, that Law, the English follower of Böhme, anticipated on his own lines, and without any traces of alchemical knowledge, this new-old doctrine. He spoke of a world that was originally plastic, and "fluid," subject to the will of the *parens proloplastus*. In consequence of a certain cosmic disaster this fluid world was hardened and degraded into its present state. It may be, then, that the making of gold was but the by-work, the accident, of a more transcendent operation, and if this were so, if the particular were put for the universal by some of the alchemical writers, we could better understand the strange air of rapture and ecstasy which pervades their works; we could understand their fervent disclaimer of any worldly motives. In itself the making of gold is no more wonderful than the making of diamonds, it is a quite possible item of intelligence in to-morrow's morning paper; but certain of the alchemical adepts speak the language of men who have entered into the glories and delights of Paradise.

It is not long since we drew attention in these columns to the *differentia* of "the modern spirit"—its utter inability to construct or to comprehend the simplest of syllogisms, its entire readiness to draw the most absurd conclusions from the most irrelevant premises. The instance we offered was a strong one, coming as it did from the "Great Philosopher" Herbert Spencer; it was the green tree of irrationality. Here is the dry wood of the same forest, as exemplified in the *Westminster Gazette*. It occurs, very appropriately, in a review of some treatise on "Modernism":

We hear occasionally of "Catholic Truth," which requires the

efforts and subscriptions of a society to make it true. Such a conception is absurd. Truth cannot be sectarian. We might as well talk of Protestant Mathematics or Jewish Euclid.

From this passage we gather, firstly, that the truth needs no defence and no demonstration, from which it follows that the foundation of, say, an "English Historical Society," with a president, a committee, subscriptions, publications, and, possibly, a monthly organ would be absurd. History is the Truth about past events; therefore it would be ridiculous to make any efforts to clear up doubtful points, to elucidate complicated transactions, to defend sober and scholarly historical positions from the attacks of the cranks and maniacs who have discovered that Bacon wrote the whole literature of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and that the Anglo-Saxons are the Lost Tribes of Israel. And, in the same way, medical writers are to beware of forming any organisation with a view to convincing people of the danger of sleeping ten in a room, of drinking infected water, of smoking green tea, of injecting morphia three times a day, and of believing in quack "Powders to cure Cancer." All these are heresies against the Truth of Medicine and Hygiene, therefore, no efforts, or subscriptions, or speeches, or pamphlets are needed to defend the Truth in question. It would thus be highly ridiculous for a doctor to fight the delusions and absurdities of "Christian Science" with all the knowledge and all the energy at his command.

And "Truth cannot be sectarian." If this means anything, it means that it is not possible to imagine the existence of a difference of opinion on any possible subject; that every "fact" of the universe must be absolutely clear and certain, and that from each of such facts there is only one conceivable deduction. It is difficult to believe that any man in his sober senses can have deliberately emitted such a proposition as this; yet, there it stands, and, considering all things, it is perhaps the most false statement that has ever been made since the world was "a fluid haze of light." Nevertheless, the writer's meaning is plain, for he goes on to say that one might as well talk of "Protestant Mathematics or Jewish Euclid;" whence it follows that this "modernist" reviewer believes that the propositions of religious truth are exactly analogous to the propositions of mathematical truth. *Et homo factus est* is as clear, self-evident, and certain as *Two and two make four*; *Et resurrexit tertia die* is a proposition as demonstrable as *The angles at the base of an isosceles triangle are equal*. Now, it is highly unlikely that there has been any radical alteration in the constitution of the human brain in the course of ages; yet here we have a grown man, of some education, endowed with a certain measure of literary facility, uttering propositions which would have proved a sure passport to the Rod and the Booby's Bench if they, or anything like unto them, had been advanced by an eight-year-old child in the twelfth century. The modern (or "modernist") spirit is certainly very curious.

The theatre just now is threatened by a wave of talk. Possibly the fashion may be traced to the brilliant plays of the late Mr. Oscar Wilde, who at any rate had an exquisite sense of the theatre. Then comes another Irishman, whose theatrical sense is obscured by a too great share of the national love of loquacity; and now we have Mr. Maurice Baring, who, in the presence of a most distinguished audience, produced a play called *The Grey Stocking* at the Royalty Theatre last week. Unhappily there was no sign of the play itself until late in the second Act, and even then the clever author seemed to be doing his best to strangle it at its belated birth. None the less, there were signs that Mr. Baring could, if he let nature alone, produce a play of real dramatic importance. As it was, what plot there was was almost suffocated by the torrents of quite ingenious talk put into the mouths of his "society" puppets. It was only fitting that the hero should be a Russian diplomatist. The reception was most cordial.

AT ST. NICHOLAS IN PRISIAC

On the altar-rail of St. Nicholas Church
Two little angels with wings of wood,
Each on the top of a slender perch
Stand in the stillness watching the Rood.
Little twin angels gowned in blue,
These are the words of a song for you :

" Praise ! praise ! for all days
To the man that made us with his hands ;
Many come from many lands
To gaze, gaze, and go their ways.
" Gloom, gloom has hidden his doom ;
Where he lies no man can tell.
Pray we a rose and a little bluebell,
Bloom, bloom about his tomb.
" In making us he praised the Lord,
Who made the man and made the tree,
And till the woodworm like a sword
Smites us to dust his prayer are we."

A. HUGH FISHER.

"AD EXTREMAS TENEBRAS"

I hear the lapping of the waves of death
In Stygian wells ;
I see the white-winged moths that bring the breath
Of asphodels.
I feel how steeply slopes toward the night
This awful track,
And see the narrowing disk of life and light
When I look back.
The flowers of Enna, falling from my hand,
Already die ;
I follow dumbly to the starless land
Too tired to sigh.
Yet if, O dread Aidoneus, one like me
May ask a boon,
I pray it may not be Persephone
Who meets me soon.
For in her heavy hair there still are gleams
Of former gold,
And in her sombre eyes lurk hopes and dreams
Of Springs untold.
She doth but winter in thy realms, O Dis,
Not nest with thee ;
Her regal mouth, still haunted by a kiss,
Would weary me.
But let there meet me one too poor for scorn,
Dim-eyed, and hoar,
Wan as Demeter when she sat forlorn
By Celeus' door.
And let Tiresias come who, shrinking, knows
A woman's heart,
To lead me where the Lethe coldest flows
And pitying yew its closest covert grows
Far off, apart.

ANNA BUNSTON.

REVIEWS

MR. BIRRELL ON BROWNING

Browning. Selected Poems. With an Introduction by
AUGUSTINE BIRRELL. Illustrated. (Jack, 2s. 6d. net.)

"PRAVE 'ORTS" are these of Mr. Birrell on Browning. There is something in him of the eternal fighter, and always in his best writing something brave and challenging. He enters upon contention blithely, and loves to champion an old cause or avow some impossible loyalty. Like Leslie Stephen, he is essentially a prose critic, and perhaps would cheerfully agree that what he says about poetry, as poetry, does not matter in the least. If he were to tell us that Shelley was no poet, and that Coleridge's fame is less secure than Southey's, we should not be in the least annoyed, so genial is he. He refuses to take himself very seriously (at least in criticism), and would only smile if we took him seriously. Yet there are few living essayists we read more readily or with more pleasure. As a critic of prose, as an interpreter of the prose mind (far be it from us to suggest any disparagement), he is stimulating and delightful. He has a share of the sound common sense of Johnson, whom he understands so well, the gusto of Hazlitt, whom he has served so well, and a humorous shrewdness that is purely his own. It is therefore an admirable arrangement whereby these hearty qualities are engaged in the appreciation of Browning, for we think that a prose critic can do fully as much for Browning as the most sensitive reporter of impressions or the most transcendental of philosophical critics. If you do not agree with Mr. Birrell (as is sometimes impossible), he is quite content to agree with himself. He will always have a reason for the faith that is in him, and if he does not convert you to his faith, he will certainly entertain you by his reason. You know that in the present volume, for example, he will not read any brilliant unveracities into the cruder and more cryptic utterances of his poet. He will say—yes, he does say in his Introduction :

Of Browning's philosophy we have perhaps heard enough. There is indeed a philosophy of life, a constant attitude of mind towards the world, a character and sentiment which we look for in poets and poetry, and if it is not there the poetry suffers. But philosophy in poetry is usually no great thing.

This is indeed to "give away" his poet, yet even Browning Societies will hardly quarrel with so good-humoured a betrayal.

The prose critic is the best for Browning because Browning, though he wrote uniquely and magnificently in verse, so often simply wrote prose as verse—wrote verse when he had prose in his heart. To put it more clearly and emphatically, much that Browning wrote in verse would have been written not merely more plainly, but more fittingly and perfectly in prose. We do not say that his subjects were incapable of verse, but it often seems that he dealt with them from a prose level. Such a selection as Mr. Birrell's for the most part avoids the prose level, and lures the reader from height to height. He has made the only wise selection by the "supremely selfish" plan of pleasing himself ; and we ourselves would be no less pleased if only he had omitted "Bishop Blougram's Apology," which, in spite of his championship, we still find tedious philosophy and (commonly) poor verse ; verse such as :

Of course you are remarking all this time
How narrowly and grossly I view life.

Some thirty of Mr. Birrell's three hundred pages are taken up with the voluble Bishop, which might well have been given to some of the songs, such as that lovely one beginning :

Heap cassia, sandal-buds and stripes
Of labdanum, and aloe balls—

the loveliness of which (as with so many true lyrics) is almost independent of the explicit meaning.

Mr. Birrell says nothing upon the obscurity with which Browning is so often charged. Wisely: for the charge is an idle and inconclusive one. The real defect of his work lies deeper than any mere verbal obscurity. The difficulty of expression is not invincible—at worst only irritating; but too often it seems that Browning did not speak clearly because he did not think clearly, because his inspiration was faint and confused. We have been told often enough that platitude which has the beauty of sounding brass or tinkling cymbal is still but platitude, but we forget that platitude made tortuous and indistinct is also platitude still. Did Browning deceive himself? At any rate, he has deceived others until the incoherencies and verbal tangles have been held to conceal mysteries which it is not lawful or possible for tongue to utter; and the crying faults of the verse, the wilful and careless roughness, the almost incessant restlessness, the obvious contempt for words—all betraying a certain singular strain of intellectual vulgarity—have themselves been first pardoned, and then accepted as necessary to the genius of the poet. Even in the noble "Abt Vogler" you will find a line like this:

In sight? Not half! for it seemed, it was certain, to match man's birth.

In "James Lee's Wife":

For then, then, what would it matter to me
That I was the harsh ill-favoured one?
We both should be like as pea to pea;
It was ever so since the world begun;
So let me proceed with my reverie.

How ill he writes when his inspiration is less perfect than in "Abt Vogler" every reader knows.

Never has there been so careless a craftsman with so great gifts. He had almost every gift which even a poet may be expected to have, and he had that special and peculiar gift, an individuality which was bound to impress itself upon his earliest as upon his latest work; for he was never the "sedulous ape" of prose. But the gift needed to bring all others to full flower, gift of a passion for perfect expression of his conceptions and perfect form for his imaginations—this he had not, or had but intermittently and in uncertain measure; though many another poet, with but a tithe of his prodigious intellectual endowment, has had sufficient of this consummate passion to bring him securely into the unassailable temple of immortality. Of their best work we may say, in Browning's own phrase (a phrase that at least shows his perception to have been clear and accurate, how flawed soever his practice):

It is all triumphant art, but art in obedience to laws.

Time, who is himself a more consummate artist than any poet, and of an austerer judgment than any critic, is slowly casting many of the faultiest things into oblivion, lightening the craft to save it; he will not cumber himself with anything but a man's best, and no urgent pleading will persuade him to pardon the unpardonable sin and preserve the flaws for the sake of the philosophy. Mr. Birrell himself frankly recognises this:

We must distinguish in Browning's case between poems and poems. Some wrecks are total, from others half the cargo may be saved. . . . A good fraction there must always be. You can never get rid of Browning at his best. There he will be in the thick of life, appearing in books, emerging in conversation, on the lips of lovers, in the sermons of divines, in moments of eager emotion, and in times of sorrow.

With this judicial pronouncement both sides may rest satisfied. It is no contemptible immortality. Surely it is much if, out of the enormous conglomeration of the collected poems, only some of the songs and shorter pieces be saved, and the giant confusion of the rest be left to curious and enthusiastic scholars. In another metaphor Browning is a continent in miniature, with crowded cities of men who love and wrangle, and die in the suburbs; with hills and sudden mountain peaks; with leagues of wild morass, lands broken and comfortless as those of Childe Roland's adventure, with here and there forests of fervid heat; with unnavigable rivers and brackish inland

seas. For some it will always be a fairy land, the more prized because perilous and bewildering to sense.

A ROYAL MANOR

The Royal Manor of Richmond. By MRS. A. G. BELL.
(George Bell and Sons, 7s. 6d. net.)

THE Royal Manor of Richmond has attracted a variety of writers during recent years, such as Sir John Evans, Mr. Beresford Chancellor, and Dr. Garnett; but it has been left for Mrs. Arthur Bell to produce a thoroughly readable and entertaining volume of reasonable limits, attractively illustrated by her husband with ten plates in colour. One of these pictures, a Winter Sunrise in Richmond Park, is of exceptional merit. There is no strain after effective writing in these pages; in fact, they strike us as being written with graceful ease. The passage relative to the winter aspect of the Great Park may be cited as an example:

Even more beautiful than its ordinary winter aspect is the Park when snow has fallen, and all is transformed and etherealised by the pure white covering in which everything is shrouded, when familiar objects are so changed that recognition is difficult, and the very deer seem to feel themselves at a loss as they roam about in search of food. To the poetic temperament the time of frost will indeed appeal with special force, but it is really at night, at every season of the year, when there is no light in earth or heaven but the pale light of stars, that Richmond Park excels itself in its romantic charm, for then to all its other attractions is added that of mystery. Through the darkness loom the huge forms of the forest trees, resembling the ogres of fairyland, isolated hawthorns, some of which even in bright sunshine look as if a curse had fallen upon them, so weird and distorted are their forms, seem to stretch out long fingers to clutch the unwary. Strange, too, and impressively solemn are the rare sounds that break the brooding silence, for now a stag gives vent to a roar of discontent, or a lonely hound, craving for companionship, utters a melancholy howl. Then, perhaps, a heron, on his way to his solitary fishing in the river near Sion House, calls to his mate; a nightjar sounds his vibrating whirr, like that of a spinning-wheel, as he peers down from his lofty perch; or an owl mournfully complains as he passes by with muffled flight, intent on his living prey—perhaps a young rabbit, or a little shrew that has lost its way in the long grass and betrays its presence by a plaintive cry.

The opening chapter is concerned with the ancient Manor House of Sheen, which had an interesting history of its own long before the time when it was transformed into a palace by Henry VII., who gave to it his own name of Richmond. During the latter years of his strenuous life Edward I. was more than once at Sheen. It was in the old manor house that he received the Commissioners from Scotland in 1305, after the unhappy execution in London of Sir William Wallace. It was here, too, that Edward III. often held his Court, entertaining distinguished foreigners on a magnificent scale. There are many memories associated with this peaceful riverside home in connection with his Queen Philippa and his beloved Black Prince, and it was here that the news of his death reached his widowed father a year before the King himself passed away. It was at Sheen also that Edward III. died his sorry death in 1377:

Deserted by all his courtiers, and attended by but a single priest, whose presence did not deter his rapacious mistress from robbing her dying lover even of the rings upon his fingers.

Soon after the funeral a deputation of the leading citizens of London went down to Sheen to congratulate the child-king Richard II., then only ten years old, on his accession to the Throne. It is pleasant to be reminded that the boyhood of the youthful Sovereign caused him to forget his dignity in his delight, for he ran round the great hall eagerly embracing his guests and kissing them on both cheeks instead of waiting for them to do homage to him. On the following day Richard, robed in white and riding on a white horse, went forth from Sheen to make formal entry into his capital, attended by his four uncles and a great retinue of nobles. In his earlier, happy days, after his marriage in 1382 to Anne of Bohemia, Sheen was a

favourite residence of both King and Queen. On the death of his Queen at Sheen, in 1394, Richard took a great dislike to his riverside residence, and, indeed, ordered that it should be at once completely destroyed. But he was apparently only partially obeyed, for Henry V. lived there for some time when Prince of Wales, and on his accession had the old buildings restored and made once more worthy of the name of palace. There he spent a brief but happy time with his young Queen, Catherine of France, whom he brought to England in 1421.

During the long minority of Henry VI., Sheen was almost deserted, and it was practically as a prisoner that this unfortunate King, declared insane by his physicians, was taken to Sheen in 1454. Edward IV. gave the estate of Sheen to his Queen, Elizabeth, in 1467 for her life, and it was here that Elizabeth, after the death of Edward, when waiting for the summons to the capital, received the tidings of the murder of her two young sons in the Tower. After Richard III. met the just reward of his many sins at the Battle of Bosworth, Henry VII., the second Earl of Richmond, in Yorkshire, determined to change its name to that of his hereditary estate, and speedily extended the buildings of Sheen Palace and added considerably to the pleasure-grounds. From this time forward Richmond—for its new name was rigidly enforced in all State papers—was closely bound up with the story of the Tudor dynasty, and was the scene of an infinite variety of national and important incidents. Just at the close of the fifteenth century the great pile of buildings was almost entirely destroyed by fire. Henry VII., however, at once set to work to have Richmond Palace rebuilt on a far larger and more majestic scale. The latest phase of Gothic architecture of the Tudor period was employed without any touch of classicism to interfere with the due development of the Tudor style, which was so essentially English. Until Cardinal Wolsey, in 1526, transferred to Henry VIII. his unfinished but grandly planned mansion of Hampton Court, the Palace of Richmond remained by far the noblest residence of either Henry VII. or his successor. The rebuilt Richmond was completed in time for the contract of marriage to take place, in 1501, between his eldest son, Prince Arthur, and Catherine of Aragon.

It was at Richmond that Henry VII. died; it was here that Henry VIII. spent his honeymoon with his first wife, and it was here that his first child—a son—was born, on New Year's Day, 1511. In attractively-written paragraphs, containing just a sufficiency of accurate historical information for a book of this character, Mrs. Bell proceeds to follow up the later history of the Royal Palace of Richmond, down to the time when Queen Caroline passed away, in 1737. For the next half-century Richmond remained deserted by the Royal Family, nor is there any record of either George IV. or William IV. ever living in the Palace, though they may have been there as children. By the time Queen Victoria came to the Throne many of the remaining portions of the grand old mansion, much of which had been deliberately demolished in the reign of Queen Anne, had been pulled down. In its palmy days the buildings of all kinds are said to have covered more than ten acres of ground. The small remnant of the old Palace still remaining has, however, been treated with respect by its successive tenants during the past seventy years.

In subsequent chapters interesting information is pleasantly set forth with regard to the royal lodge, the Old Deer Park, the Ferry, the bridge, the green, and the town with its churches and charities. A special section treats of the Great Park and its inhabitants, particularly the deer.

In the last two chapters there is much agreeable writing about Petersham, Ham House, and Kew and its memories. We can only say, in conclusion, that having read most, if not all, of the many topographical works that have been issued about the various interesting and historic sites and places within easy reach of London that have been issued during the last forty years, we have no hesitation in saying that Mrs. Bell is to be congratulated on having produced one of the very first rank.

WILLIAM COLLINS

The Poems of William Collins. Edited by CHRISTOPHER STONE. (Frowde, 2s. 6d. net.)

CRITICISM has given up the idea of cataclysms in literature, just as science has given up the idea of cataclysms in Nature. It sees developments not as sudden events which can be dated to a particular period and declared to have occurred at that period without warning or preparation. Changes in literature, as in the face of the earth, are now seen to be of slow growth. There are premonitions of them; the process goes on undiscovered by the critics of its own day, who, perhaps, are too busy preaching their own formulæ to watch the straws which indicate the change in the wind. Then, with a fictitious appearance of suddenness, the face of literature is changed, and not for many years, perhaps, is the truth made plain. When Voltaire visited England he laid the foundations of "Hernani" and the "Ballade à la Lune." And when the French Revolution came to affect English thought, it forced to the surface and gave free play to streams of effort and tendency that had been working silently, with no man seeing their significance and direction, for many years.

The case of William Collins is an instance of this. The romantics of a century ago honoured him, of course; but it is only lately that he has had his full share of attention, and that his full importance as a forerunner of the romantics has been recognised in criticism. The poet with whom he must always be coupled, Gray, has had a far greater vogue, won for him on the one hand among amateurs of poetry by his exquisite workmanship and his profound critical faculty, and on the other among *la foule* by what we may, perhaps, be permitted to call the B. W. Leader elements in a single one of his poems. Yet in spite of the much misjudged beauties of the famous *Elegy* (and really it is not Gray's fault that the weaker Academicians cannot let him alone when they want titles for their pictures), his place in the development of our poetry was not, perhaps, on the whole, so important as that of the much-less popular Collins. Nor is the melancholy collegian either so attractive or so significant a figure as the dashing, showy Winchester and Magdalen boy, with his love of fine clothes and fine airs, his teeming brain and indifferent perseverance, his wide but disordered knowledge, his sensitive, excitable nature which sank, under his own and others' fault, into the melancholia and the inertia in which, under the offensive protection of a sister who despised him, his last unhappy years were spent.

Had Collins left but the less valuable part of his own poetry, had the bulk of it survived without the gems which ensure him immortality, he would still have deserved commemoration among the English poets. Pope had stamped his overbearing genius on poetry, and Pope had died. In the silence that followed his death there was heard a new note. That note was inevitably affected by the approved song of the times; nevertheless it was a fearless note. The singer did not "stoop to moralise this song;" he did not care overmuch for "decency" or "simplicity" of expression. He had, as Hazlitt said, "that true *vivida vis*, that genuine inspiration, which alone can give birth to the highest efforts of poetry." He caught "rich glimpses of the bowers of paradise." He gave the rein to his luxuriant imagination, and, refusing to be bound by the prevailing mode, wrote, with courage and ardour, what he wanted to write. If his structure is loose, his metaphors violent, his workmanship sometimes rugged, and his diction obscure, he had at least the poetic fire, the enthusiasm, which his friends the Wartons were alone in those days in demanding. And the value to poetry of enthusiasm at such a period was immense.

It is quite possible, however, to be of considerable service to poetry and yet to be a dull or annoying poet. Happily, that cannot be said of Collins; and Mr.

Christopher Stone has not spent his time in scraping and arranging dead bones for the poetic museum. There are things in Collins's poetry, sometimes isolated, sometimes structural, which are so beautiful as to take the breath away. The "Ode to Pity" is not, as a complete poem, a thing of much beauty or interest. It has a good deal of the stiffness and demureness of the dead classic style about it. Yet it contains these lines :

Long, Pity, let the Nations view
Thy sky-worn Robes of tend'rest Blue,
And Eyes of dewy Light !

What images that evokes ! How much more it gives to the mind and the imagination than the mere meaning of the words conveys ! And perhaps that is Collins's greatest achievement of all : that he was the first to restore to our poetry what Henry Bataille calls "*le langage indirect*." His meaning is not confined to the meaning which his actual words express. He makes of a few words not a sentence or a sentiment, but a star towards which the mind and the imagination go travelling through heavens of beauty. And surely that is the test of the greatest poetry—not what it says, but the new world which it creates by saying it. Collins not seldom creates this magic world, and wraps his reader away with him by the enthusiasm which inspired his song, as if with verbal inspiration. Few poets can paint such gorgeous pictures as he ; the second movement of the "Ode on the Poetical Character," and the whole of the ode on "The Passions," with its superb close, show as glowing a fancy and as lofty a flight of poetic eloquence as can be found in any of our poets, except possibly Mr. Swinburne. And if his craftsmanship is sometimes rugged, Collins achieves more than once that rarest thing of all, a perfect simplicity instinct with the highest qualities of poetry :

How sleep the Brave, who sink to Rest,
By all their Country's Wishes blest !
When Spring, with dewy Fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallow'd Mold,
She there shall dress a sweeter Sod
Than Fancy's Feet have ever trod.

By Fairy Hands their Knell is rung,
By Forms unseen their Dirge is sung ;
Then Honour comes, a Pilgrim grey,
To bless the Turf that wraps their Clay,
And Freedom shall a-while repair,
To dwell a weeping Hermit there !

That indeed creates a new world. Without a trace of effort, without grandiloquence or display, it soars into the blue, and would be enough of itself to stamp its author a true poet. But finer still is the poem which, in spite of the obvious objections that have been levelled against it, we take leave to consider Collins's highest achievement and the best unrhymed lyric in the English language—better even than Campion's "Rose-cheeked Laura"—the "Ode to Evening :

If aught of Oaten Stop, or Pastoral Song,
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy pensive Ear,
Like thy own solemn Springs,
Thy Springs, and dying Gales,
O Nymph reserv'd
For when thy folding Star arising shows
His paly Cirlet, at his warning Lamp
The fragrant Hours, and Elves
Who slept in Flowers the Day,
And many a Nymph who wreaths her Brows with Sedge
And sheds the fresh'ning Dew, and lovelier still,
The Pensive Pleasures sweet
Prepare thy shadowy Car.
Then let me rove some wild and heathy Scene,
Or find some Ruin 'midst its dreary Dells,
Whose Walls more awful nod
By thy religious Gleams.
Or if chill blust'ring Winds, or driving Rain,
Prevent my willing Feet, be mine the Hut,
That from the Mountain's side
Views Wilds, and swelling Floods,
And Hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd Spires,
And hears their simple Bell, and marks o'er all
Thy Dewy Fingers draw
The gradual dusky Veil.

It paints an earthly picture, which is yet not of earth ; it creates a mood and carries the reader away into the region of pure poetry ; it intoxicates him with the intoxication of the gods. And yet, how quiet, how natural it all is—how entirely free from bombast or affectation or false elevation or false sentiment ! When the famous Stoke Poges "Elegy" palls, the "Ode to Evening" seems still a mystery of delight. And, though Mr. Stone prints the ode from the only authoritative edition—that of 1746—the Dodsley version of it is so much better known and loved that we have ventured to quote from it above.

It only remains to say that Mr. Stone, who has given evidence in these columns already of his close study of Collins, has produced a complete and scholarly edition, with an admirable introduction. These are very pleasant green volumes that come from the publisher to Collins's University, and the latest will not be the least prized among them.

GOETHE'S LIFE

The Life of Goethe. By ALBERT BIELOCHOWSKY, Ph.D.
Vol. III. (London and New York : Putnam, 1908.)

THIS is the concluding volume of the late Professor Bielochowsky's "Life of Goethe," a work which makes every possible pretence to be monumental. It is no doubt the last word of German professorial criticism of the great poet. Its pomposity and ponderosity are extreme, and though it claims to throw light upon the obscurities of portions of Goethe's work, the style in which it is written is confused and obscure to a degree which is often very tiresome, and unfortunately the defects of the original text are in no way helped out by Mr. William Cooper's translation. Here is a specimen of badly-arranged sentences which we have rarely seen beaten in any translation from the German or any other language, and in a book devoted to the memory of such a master of flowing periods as was Goethe it is an act of literary *lèse majesté* :

The Elegie, that painful, yet sweet reflection of the wonderfully beautiful summer days. Was not its effect upon him a clear indication of the direction in which he should turn for self-preservation ? Thus, at the close of the year, we find him free from all thoughts of renunciation, and looking forward to the new year with anxious, but happy anticipation.

Nothing could be more hideous and irritating than this crash of 'shons, and that such English as this should be issued from Stanford University in the United States is no credit to that seat of learning. The lover of Goethe who is not blinded by national pride will not feel, we are convinced, that Professor Bielochowsky has drawn either a felicitous or truthful portrait of the author of "Faust." The concluding volume, it is true, contains less of the Professor's literary criticisms than did its predecessors, death having, sad to relate, stepped in to prevent the completion of the biography by the industrious hand that originally undertook it ; but the hands which have added the final chapters are, alas ! not a whit less heavy. In fact, it is no exaggeration to say that the added essays upon Goethe's standing as a philosopher and a man of letters by Professors Kalischer and Ziegler are so clumsily and obscurely written that they make the reader regret the comparatively lighter style of the late Professor Bielochowsky, whose fluent platitudes, irritating as they often were, were not so positively maddening as the illogical word-puzzles of his posthumous collaborators. We are spared, however, the professorial hole-picking in the art of Goethe considered as a poet, and in his conceptions as a thinker, which characterised the earlier volumes of Professor Bielochowsky's work, and were so curiously inconsistent with the theory simultaneously advanced that he was the greatest poet of all time—as if, in that case, the blue and red pencillings of German professors would not have been an intolerable impertinence. The final volume is a thunderous eulogy in the most approved modern German style, and Goethe emerges from it as a kind of Pan-Germanic demi-god, invested with intellectual and poetic powers which practically amounted to omniscience

and omnipotence. In the present state of Germany, such a theory as this may give pleasure in popular and official circles, but it has neither historical fact nor critical reasonableness as a basis. When will the honest German critic be born who will stand forth in his simplicity and say that the second part of "Faust" is the *radotage* of a very old man of once brilliant intellect who had not known when to stop writing, and had long ago lost the thread of his first conceptions? This the poet himself practically admitted to be the case. But for the officious advice of his friends—notably of Schiller—he would have left "Faust" in its original state as a fragment. But it was an age of minute finish, and the German world was not as yet prepared for such Rodinesque surrender to the ineffable and the unfixable as Coleridge was to set the example of in "Christabel" and "Kubla Khan":

These Gretchen scenes, says Professor Ziegler, taken together form probably the greatest masterpiece of poetry every written. Infinite in their beauty and tenderness, they are at the same time so profoundly tragical that all the woes of mankind appear in the most narrow limits of the life of a girl of the common people. First, Faust's senses are inflamed at the sight of Gretchen. In the "Urfaust" (the first version of "Faust") we read: "A wondrous pretty maid is she, And something she's inflamed in me." Hardly has he seen her when he says to Mephistophiles, "Hear! thou must the girl for me procure." The potion has had its effect; he speaks like Jack Profligate, speaks almost like a Frenchman. . . . To Gretchen, the divining angel, after her return home, the air of the room feels sultry and close. As though prophesying her own future, she sings "Der König in Thule," that ballad of fidelity and parting. Then she finds the casket. "What the dickens is this thing?" exclaims the child of the common people; and she cannot take her eyes off its contents, for "Gold all doth lure, And gold procure all gladly! Alas! we poor!"

This is a fair specimen of the critical analysis which is to be found in this concluding volume of Bielochowsky's "Life of Goethe," and also of Mr. Cooper's method of translation. The wretched doggerel into which he converts Goethe's nervous and harmonious lines can only give a totally erroneous impression of the original text, and are unfair to the great reputation which this stodgy book is meant to honour. Goethe did not share his biographers' views as to the value of these "Gretchen scenes." "Wavering figures," "clouded vision," "fantastic idea," "foggy mist" were the terms in which he referred to them. In his correspondence with Schiller he spoke also of this "foggy, misty path" on which he had for a time felt forced "to stray about." He called the whole "a barbaric composition," and "caricatures" the scenes and figures which, according to Professor Ziegler, "appear to us to-day so serious and true to nature, not to say sacred." Schiller, who was just as classical as his friend, agreed with him as to the "barbaric nature of his treatment of the subject," and himself called the fable "harsh and formless." Professor Ziegler attributes this disdainful attitude towards "Faust" on the part of its author to the circumstance that Goethe had outgrown "Faust" and that "Faust" had outgrown Goethe. The first clause of this explanation is probable enough; the corollary is less obvious. Evidently Goethe as he grew older must have recognised the puerility and inexperience which are at the basis of the entire Gretchen incident—a simple *fait divers* which would have been possible only on the assumption that Faust's powers of seduction were as limited as those of an ordinary human lover. No real tragedy can ever arise from a situation which has its origin in magic. With all the riches in the world at his command, Faust could have made Gretchen, her mother, and her brother wealthy for life, even procuring for them the respect of the world which wealth commands, and if the principle of "Gold all doth lure, And gold procure" was to apply so absolutely to the pure soul of Gretchen there is no reason for its not having precisely the same force with her mother, her brother, her neighbours, and her judges. Faust's conduct is that of a seducer with limited means. The real moral might have been that neither wealth nor the enjoyment of feminine loveliness can give

perfect happiness on earth, and in the long run Faust's soul might have been saved owing to the utter inability of Mephisto to fulfil his part of the bargain—namely, to make Faust happy in this life. Then the Gretchen incident, so far as its tragic conclusion is concerned, would have been supererogatory. Goethe no doubt recognised in later life that it was so, and the meaninglessness of the Gretchen scenes justify Schiller's epithets applied to the fable of "harsh and formless." Marlowe fell into no such mistake. His Doctor Faustus spends a few moments of delirious bliss with Helen of Greece, but in an earlier part of the drama, when Faustus, not having quite grasped the nature of his new powers, expresses the desire to have a wife, Mephistophiles introduces to him a she-devil, and promptly cures him of this too mundane ambition. The Gretchen tragedy was just fitted to inspire the feuilletonesque music of Gounod, and to become a popular opera. Goethe outgrew it, and, recognising that the vast edifice of "Faust," built upon sand, had collapsed, he saw no objection to treating it as a kind of scrap-heap, or, to use Professor Ziegler own words, to

Thoughtlessly insert all sorts of irrelevant things in the "barbaric composition," and make it the depository for a number of *Xenien*, for which he could find no other place.

In this way, however, "Faust" became a treasure-house for many exquisite poems which, considered separately, are pearls of highest price, and suffice to make Goethe's fame immortal. Goethe's mania for generalisation and theorising which inspired his abortive scientific studies, and his fantastic philosophy, induced him to give to the first and fragmentary part of "Faust" a symbolic second and concluding part. A hopeless muddle of politics, religion, pseudo-science, and amateur philosophy, presented in allegorical and symbolic form, and occasionally relieved by exquisite lines and gem-like stanzas, are thus presented as a rational sequel to what was a frank and charming *pol-pourri*. Out of unintelligible muddle pretentious German critics have made an infinitely more monstrous muddle by reading into the second part of "Faust" a kind of *résumé* of all human thought and knowledge, "a picture of the world and mankind," the "human tragedy," the "drama of the human race," "the individual widened out to the universal human." "Such is 'Faust,'" says Professor Ziegler, "and such was Goethe." Such, alas! is his latest biographer.

A similar determination to make everything out of little, and something out of nothing, is revealed in Professor Kalischer's account of Goethe as a man of science. Goethe was undoubtedly (and in this respect he closely resembled the great Frenchman, for whom he professed so unbounded an admiration, Voltaire) a tireless stirrer-up of ideas. Most poets have been this, for to stir up ideas is one of the functions of the imaginative faculty. Thus Goethe's botanical speculations were part of his poetry, and had he recognised this and been less eager to play the rôle of an exact investigator he might have accomplished a much more useful work than he can actually be credited with. If we were to listen to the airy suggestions of Professor Kalischer we should be led to believe that Goethe had forecast most of the principles upon which modern biology is based. His theory of what he called the "metamorphose" of plants Professor Kalischer says may be identified with the modern (?) principle of transformation accepted by botanists; but surely it is going too far to imply that Goethe anticipated thereby the evolutionary theory of Darwin. Goethe's "metamorphose" amounted to no more than this, that he recognised all the appendages or lateral organs of the plant axis or stalk to be transformed or metamorphosed leaves, and we know that one of his own countrymen, Wolff, had already enunciated the same doctrine. Goethe, moreover, had no notion of the elementary organism, the cell. From Goethe the poet one might have expected to receive fruitful suggestions as to the psychology of plants, a subject admirably suited to his splendid imaginative receptivity, but Goethe the would-be man of science could not resist the vain temptation to measure himself with Linnæus. Perhaps in one of

his letters, when he uses the phrase "conversed familiarly with the branches and tendrils of the grape-vines, which gave me good new ideas," he might have been dimly conscious of those powers of suggestion possessed by plants and immobile bodies generally, to a knowledge of which modern science is slowly opening its eyes. But the positive results achieved by Goethe as a scientific investigator matter little, and there is no need for German professors to magnify or distort them. Goethe's greatness rests upon much grander foundations. He is Germany's supreme artist—a great imaginative poet in word and deed, the one, with all its limitations, entirely admirable German of comparatively modern times. To appreciate the many-sided greatness of his splendid genius such a biography as that of the late Professor Bielochowsky is too subjective (to employ the favourite German word). A far more useful and suggestive "Life" is that by Heinrich Düntzer, the excellent translation of which, by Mr. Thomas W. Lyster, has just been reissued in a half-crown edition by Mr. T. Fisher Unwin.

THE ROYAL ACADEMY

[THIRD ARTICLE]

THE Royal Academy Exhibition of 1908 has now been open for a clear month. If one visits such exhibitions at all it is desirable that one should visit them twice or thrice. The shock of an initial visit is perhaps sufficient for most of us. But duty must be done. No critic of parts can profess to swallow the true inwardness of a matter of 1,000 painted canvases during the course of an hour's walk round the galleries. At least so we should have imagined. Hence we have called once more at Burlington House, and we have suffered accordingly. Our opinion of the show as set forward in former articles remains precisely what it was. The more closely one looks into the Exhibition the more pitiful does it seem. The masters not only fail to distinguish themselves, but, broadly speaking, they have treated us to spiritless failures or positive eyesores. The middling and minor men may be counted so many copyists, in the sense that they depend upon their supposed betters for inspiration and method. They have no souls to call their own. Their portraits are in the manner of Sargent and their general efforts in the manner of the mannerists. We do not desire to thrash dead horses or airily to condemn the thousand or so honest toilers in paint whose work looks down on us from these walls. But taking the Exhibition gallery by gallery we are forced to the conclusion that incapacity, wrongness, want of vision, dulness, and insincerity are its prevailing characteristics.

Great pictures being out of the question, we have taken the trouble to go round the galleries without catalogue and to note down the numbers of such pictures as may be considered worthy in intention or accomplishment, pictures in fact which one might hang upon one's walls for the pleasure of seeing them and without regard to their authorship or market value. In Gallery I. we find but a single work that is satisfying. The picture is numbered 22 and called "Poplars," the artist being a Mr. C. H. H. Burleigh. In Gallery II. we lighted upon Nos. 83, 102, 106, 123, and 136, which on reference to the catalogue turn out respectively to be "Bords de Rivière," by P. A. J. Dagnan-Bouveret, "The Flamingoes," by Edward Stott, "Hermia," by W. G. Simmonds, "Autumn," by James Wallace, and "Scenes of a Childhood," by E. J. Gregory. We must call particular attention to Mr. W. G. Simmonds's "Hermia," which is a fine piece of work and worth a wilderness of "Sentences of Death" and so forth. Gallery III. contains—nothing. In Gallery IV. there is "The Meeting-house," by Frank Craig, which, in spite of its tendency to be a little mechanical, is full of fundamental thought. And there is "Evening on the Sussex Downs," by Sir Ernest Waterlow, R.A., one of the few canvases by a Royal Academician which has merit. No. 279, "The Land-locked Bay," by Herbert Draper, is

another reasonable picture in this gallery. In Room V. we find "Spring," by Christopher Williams, and "The Legend of our Lady of Boulogne." The "Spring" is admirable: "The Lady of Boulogne" we mention because the artist has set himself to do something without any sort of eye on the dealers, and he promises. Room VI. offers us "A Spring Morning," by Adrian Stokes, "Autumn Glory," by Frank T. Carter, "Autumn at Grez," by Thomas Gough, and "An Ocean Sunset," by W. Ayerst Ingram; while in Gallery VII. there is a picture called "Threading the Needle," by Cecil Jay. In the eighth Room there is nothing of note, unless we except "The Bathers," by George C. Haité, and "The Magic Pipe," by Eva Roos. In Gallery IX. we have "Spindrift," by Thomas Maybank, "The Fan Tree, Limpsfield," by W. G. Robb, and "Sunset at Southend," by Frederick J. Sang. "Springtime on the Hills," by Edward T. Jones, "Heat Haze," by Edward G. Du Val, "La Première Communion," by G. Sherwood Hunter, and "Deep in the Maze of Summer Woods," by R. Vicat Cole, in Gallery X., and "The Sandpit," by Edward L. Lawrenson in Gallery XI., are further performances which, slight though they may be, we should single out for praise. It is quite possible, of course, that we have missed other good and notable work, but we doubt it. We do not suggest that the men whose names we have mentioned represent the top of English art, or that they are the only contributors to the Royal Academy Exhibition who deserve well of the critics. But we assert that the works they exhibit are broadly the only works in this year's Exhibition that should be allowed to pass muster when one comes to talk about pictures. The plain fact is that if the broad-shouldered, genial Englishman is to paint for us with acceptance it is imperative upon him to forget all that the Royal Academy Exhibitions are likely to teach him. He must come to the present display for the express purpose of scoffing. If he remains to pray, so much the better. He must get out of his mind too the fatal idea that because Mr. So-and-So's piece of foolishness was sold at the private view for such-and-such a ponderable sum of money, Mr. So-and-So's canvas is worth a moment's consideration as work upon which one may properly base oneself. Of course this is a primary piece of advice and hackneyed. But it is, nevertheless, necessary to be said. Thirdly, the painter who wishes to draw improvement for himself out of the Royal Academy Exhibition will keep the catalogue well away from him and have nothing to do with names. There is too great a tendency on the part of people who imagine that they know about pictures to live and move under a sort of tyranny of cognomen. You will find that even persons who should know better will consider a canvas to be "pretty bad" until you read out of the catalogue to them the name of the artist. Then at once, as if by magic, their view changes, and they blush for not having observed at once that here was the handiwork of greatness. Leaving out the pronounced mannerists, whose productions are readily recognised by their glaring faults, there are few people who can distinguish at sight the work of this or that artist. Everybody pretends to possess such a gift, but if you try them without the catalogue, you will be astonished to find how little there is in it. Just as the play is the thing, so really is the picture. And if the Royal Academy were to abolish names and signatures the number of reputations that would melt into nothingness and the number of unconsidered persons who would be hailed for competent workers might astonish the Council. Anonymity has its disadvantages, but a season of it would probably do more for British Art than any amount of criticism. It might ruin a handful of decent elderly gentlemen who follow Art in the way that other decent elderly gentlemen follow fly-fishing; and it would certainly put the dealers and the judges and touts at their wits' end. But the world was not made for these gentry, and up to now they have had an excellent fat time. The Royal Academy Council would probably sooner part with its heart's blood than arrange an anonymous exhibition with a "signing" day at the end of it. Yet the thing clamours to be done.

THE SHAVING OF PATSHAW

PURSUING Mr. George Bernard Shaw's communications—pleasant and unpleasant—we received on May 28th, and again by special messenger, a second letter from the outraged playwright, which we reproduce herewith:

May 27, 1908.

Dear Lord Alfred Douglas,—

Thank goodness it was you, and not some poor devil whom it would have been your duty to sack. You **MUST** have been drunk—frightfully drunk, or in some equivalent condition; no normal man behaves like that. Now go right off to your solicitors, and show them my letter, and ask them whether they think the error a trifling one from the point of view of a British jury. Show them the article also. They need not consider me: I do not propose to take any action in the matter, and have only intervened to get you out of a scrape, leaving you to settle with yourself what you ought to do as regards your own honour. But the libel affects both the Haymarket Theatre (Harrison) and Vedrenne and Barker; and they are neither of them in any way disposed to take that dangerous sentence amiably. I feel pretty sure that your solicitors will advise you to admit the blunder and withdraw it. If they don't, change them.

Yours faithfully,

G. BERNARD SHAW.

It will be perceived that in the plenitude of his wrath Mr. Shaw is apt to forget his manners and to forget what is of far greater importance—namely, that you cannot catch old birds with druff. Although he took the best part of a week to meditate upon his awkward position, Mr. Shaw could think of nothing better in the way of argument than a rehearsal of his threats about libel actions and of his beautiful desire to help THE ACADEMY out of a tight corner. To Mr. Shaw's letter the Editor of THE ACADEMY replied as follows:

May 29, 1908.

Dear Mr. Bernard Shaw,—

Your letter is a piece of childish impertinence, but as it was evidently written in a fit of hysterical bad temper, I shall not count it against you. I am immensely amused by your professed desire to "get me out of a scrape." I do not consider that I am in any scrape at all, and I think you will find that I am a person who is very well able to look after himself without any assistance from you.

Yours faithfully,

ALFRED DOUGLAS.

Here, had it not been for Mr. Shaw's fatal itch for writing letters about nothing, the matter might have ended. But on June 1st we received from Mr. Shaw a third letter, which is appended:

May 31, 1908.

Dear Lord Alfred Douglas,—

I asked you for a friendly reparation: you have given me a savage revenge. However, perhaps it was the best way out. As you have owned up, we are satisfied; and the public will forgive you for the sake of your blazing boyishness.

There is always the question—Who is to edit the editor? Fortunately, in this case there

are two Douglasses—A. D. the poet, and—shall I say?—the hereditary Douglas. Make A. D. the editor. It needs extraordinary conscientiousness, delicacy, and Catholicism to criticise unscrupulously, brutally, and free-thinkingly, as "The Academy" is trying to do, and, indeed, derives all its interest and value from doing. That hereditary Douglas, when he gets loose from A. D., is capable of wrecking a paper—even of wrecking himself. Most people are—hence the need for editors. Excuse my preaching; I am a born improver of occasions.

Sans rancune,

G. BERNARD SHAW.

So that, on the whole, we are pleased to be able to announce that the cool £10,000 which we were to have paid out to Messrs. Vedrenne and Barker, Frederick Harrison, and Holman Clark remains sweetly at our bankers. Neither have we found it necessary to change our solicitor, nor does THE ACADEMY find itself in the smallest need of a super-editor—at any rate in the guise of Mr. Shaw. "We are satisfied." So are we!

It will be noted that the Nietzsche of Bayswater begs us to excuse him for preaching. We will excuse him this once and preach a little ourselves. There is a public moral to be drawn from Mr. Shaw's extraordinary outburst; the which moral, we think, might read—Never be indiscreet. Mr. Shaw's indiscretions in the matter before us have been multitudinous. In the beginning he was indiscreet enough to take umbrage at a reasonable piece of reproof. Then he was indiscreet enough to conceive that the author of that reproof "must have been drunk." Then he was indiscreet enough to set his conception into writing, and to suggest—apparently without sounding them on the subject—that Messrs. Vedrenne and Barker and Frederick Harrison and Holman Clark would be indiscreet enough to ask THE ACADEMY for £10,000 just to please Mr. Shaw. He was indiscreet enough also to indicate to us that while he is quite willing to help the editor of a paper out of a scrape he is equally willing to help the "poor devil" of a dramatic critic out of a position—which is, of course, the finest Socialism. Help the people whom you cannot by any possibility help, and kick soundly the people whom you can kick. There has been nothing so unseemly as Mr. Shaw's elegant talk about "the sack" for a dramatic critic since Herodias desired the head of John the Baptist. A person of Mr. Shaw's literary standing should be above these things. No editor in his senses would discharge a critic at the behest of an outside person, however ponderous or however mighty. On the other hand, outside persons of eminence cannot be too careful. In certain offices their complaints might make a difference. We believe that some of these eminent persons have knowledge of this risk and pen their semi-private communications accordingly. There are critics of position in London who dare not say the truth about anything unless it happens to be very good, merely because they know that their editors are apt to be swayed by the subtle letters of outside eminence. The business of all persons who feel themselves to be hurt by the criticisms of any journal is with that journal, and not with persons who happen to be employed on it. If Mr. Shaw will bear this in mind for the rest of his life he will be so much nearer the superman of his ideals.

Finally we are pleased to reciprocate the sentiment which Mr. Shaw embodies in the phrase "*sans rancune*." We have no reason to bear him malice; quite the contrary.

THE HIDDEN MYSTERY

THE late Ambrose Meyrick, much of whose work remains unpublished, once wrote a curious article entitled "The Hidden Mystery," which attracted a certain amount of notice, for accidental rather than essential reasons. This article appeared in the pages of a most respectable magazine, a magazine of classic fame which had settled the business of many a young poet far away back in the 'thirties and 'forties. The editor, it is supposed, was attracted by Meyrick's style, and, as it proved afterwards, could not have had any very clear understanding of the subject-matter. The magazine in question has, unfortunately, long gone the way of many worthy fellows; it consistently refused to compete with the new order of "snaps" and "bits" and photographic blurs. Consequently Meyrick's essay remains more or less inaccessible, and I have thought that readers of THE ACADEMY might be interested in a brief *résumé* of a singular argument. I believe Meyrick had originally called his study "A Meditation on an Old Print," for the text that he had chosen was the strange, the almost complete, blindness as to the beauty of Gothic art that prevailed during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He showed that even the trained draughtsmen of that period, with, say, Lincoln Cathedral before their eyes, great and magnificent, a very miracle of splendour, were quite unable to draw it correctly, to give any true idea of the real nature of the Gothic mouldings or tracery, or, indeed, of the effect of a Gothic building in gross and mere bulk:

The print that I am looking at [he writes] has indeed some sort of relation to the Cathedral. There is a nave, there is a choir, and there are the towers. I daresay that if one counted the windows one would find that the number was correct. But there is no true likeness. Stand a little distance away so that you are not disturbed by the detail; you will perceive, I think, that the picture is an odd sort of parody of the building. If a clever boy had some wooden bricks and made a model of the Cathedral with them, then the engraving might very well be a picture of *that*. And if you draw near, then you see how monstrously the artist misrepresented the great work before him. If the delineation seen in mere mass is a distortion; in little, in detail, in such matters as mouldings and curves and traceries, it is almost incredibly false. It is hard to believe that the artist was not a Chinaman or a Hindoo drawing a cathedral from an Englishman's description. And it is interesting to note at the same time that these bald cusps, these cheap-looking pillars, these cast-iron piers and arches (in the View of the Interior) have very much the effect that is produced by so many of the pieces of the Gothic revival. There is a church in Derby, of which the tracery of the windows is actually of cast-iron, and the result to the eye is very similar to the offence of the old print.

The essay went on to quote from Smollett's denunciation of York Minster as a masterpiece of folly in stone, from Washington Irving's shamefaced admiration for the "barbarisms" of Westminster Abbey. It called many other witnesses to testify to the very singular fact that for more than two centuries men were surrounded by wonderful buildings which they were absolutely unable to see in any true sense of the word. Meyrick also showed that, to a great extent, the same principle prevailed in the regions of literature and painting. He quoted Dr. Johnson's dictum as to Pope's "poetry," his criticism of "Lycidas," pointing out the extreme shrewdness, sagacity, and honesty of Johnson's character; and yet the Lexicographer thought that "Lycidas" was something very near akin to rubbish, and that Pope's admirably clever verse was poetry in its most absolute, perfect, and final form. And in painting were not Giotto, Cimabue, and Botticelli regarded as semi-barbarians? At the same time the essay went on to show that it would never do to say that the eighteenth century was deficient in the sense of art:

In that art which is of all the arts most pure and exalted, which, above all, is freed from the errors and muddy confusions of the logical understanding, this age of Smollett and Johnson attained the greatest and sublimest heights. Literature, if it is fine literature, speaks ultimately no doubt to the soul, but by necessity it expresses itself through and by the logical sense: it must be capable of logical analysis. An incantation, which *does* address

the *pneuma* (or rather, perhaps, the *psyche*) directly is not literature. Painting, again, if it be great painting, makes its appeal by a magical arrangement of line and colour. Here, again, the summons doubtless sounds to some mysterious inner habitant; but, again, painting must be the likeness of something, of some form or forms which are capable of logical description; and by the same law, though the Venus of the Louvre is not beautiful because of its anatomical excellence, yet sculpture cannot refuse to be judged by the laws of anatomy. But music alone moves in its own world of pure beauty; and though we are compelled to use the language of the intellect when we speak of it, though we talk of "a musical idea," this is mere poverty of speech, since the sphere of music and the sphere of the *intellectus* are apart and not interdependent. In this most pure art, then, the eighteenth century has excelled every age. Let us remember that the days of the early Georges were the days of Pergolesi, Handel, and of John Sebastian Bach. This was no time of artistic inhibition; the world may be glad when it has equalled the work of these men, and of many others of that time who made music as easily and as sweetly as the Elizabethans made verses.

Then Meyrick went on to speak of the great painters that adorned the period of Johnson; and even in architecture St. Mary-le-Strand was, after its kind, very near to perfection, while one judged the majesty of St. Paul's by the feeble, barbarous, hideous exercises in the same genre that our own days have perpetrated. "Such," he says, "as that ugly joss-house known as the Brompton Oratory:"

Compare, too, the house that a wealthy Manchester man would get built for himself c. 1860 with many a dull street in Bloomsbury built c. 1760. Rather dingy and uninspired are these streets, but they are neither vulgar, flatulent, nor maniacal. They will hardly enchant any man, but they will never fill him with disgust and horror and contempt, they will never fill his heart with a wild desire to escape to the architectural civilisation (by comparison) of a central African village of beehive huts.

But then, on the other hand, the essay continued, How are we to estimate the attitude of the period towards Nature, the visible universe generally? Clearly, the Augustans and their successors looked on the world as men blinded, stupefied, utterly befogged. Meyrick noted how the trees and streams of that spiritual man Berkeley were taken out of Plato's "Dialogues," while the "poets" went to Hampton Court Gardens and to the famous Maze for Nature. They called a wood a "bosky shade," and Johnson and Boswell, who had but a lukewarm relish for the beauties of Greenwich Park, were interested in the wild Hebrides as one is interested in grotesque oddities from the South Sea Islands. Then—to take another region of the soul—nearly all of these men, most of them acute and intelligent in a high degree, were firmly convinced that the blessings of the "Reformation" were so clear, palpable, and certain that there was no room for argument on the matter. Warton, certainly, had hinted that the Reformation had not had the best effect on the Arts, Johnson (probably for sport) had taken the unpopular side in occasional conversations with Boswell; but in the general opinion of the cultured the debate was as clear as the addition of two and two: "Popery" was wholly wrong, "Protestantism" was wholly right.

It seemed, then, to follow from all these instances that whole generations of men, no more stupid or ignorant than their ancestors or successors, might be absolutely blinded as to matters that were, literally and physically, before their eyes; there could hardly be more conspicuous objects than Lincoln Cathedral, a forest, or a mountain, or a Botticelli; and, in the region of literature, there could scarcely be a more potent evocation of beauty than that of "Lycidas." And many of the men thus blind were of very exceptional ability and acuteness on other points, and even on points of art. It was as if a man walking in a wood admired the loveliness of the oak trees, and at the same time wondered why an all-wise Creator had fashioned the grotesque ugliness of ash and beech and yew:

And so, since intelligent and thoughtful men were obviously blind as to the clear and manifest beauty displayed in Visible Nature, Gothic Architecture, Elizabethan and Caroline poetry, Catholic Ritual, etc., etc. . . . it is not at least highly probable that men no less intelligent, no less thoughtful, are at the

present moment blind as to certain matters which may not be so obvious—which, it should rather be said, seem to us not so obvious? Is it not possible that while we look down on the Augustans with pitying superiority, we ourselves may be sunken in darkness as to certain things even more vital, more important than literature and painting? This may be difficult to realise: to us Dryden's "improvements" on Chaucer seem incredible, and Smollett's desire to replace York Minster by a neat Grecian room appears pure imbecility—but, after all, *Que savons nous?* Unless we take up the position that we have attained to final and absolute and universal perfection; that we have surpassed all the wisdom of the wise, all the art of the ages, all the visions of the seers; that compared with us all precedent humanity is, in all things, as a schoolboy in the multiplication-table to Sir Isaac Newton; that the supreme goal has been attained, the race won for ever—unless we take up this highly ridiculous and impossible position, we must confess that there is at least a great probability that we in our turn are blind to many sights, deaf to many sounds, ignorant of many wonders, nescient of many mysteries.

The essay shows the probability of this thesis by many analogies drawn from things of the mind and from things of matter. It instances the laws of logical science, latent in men's thought from the very beginning, and yet not clearly perceived or demonstrated till the day of Aristotle. Here was a mystery or magistry that had been visible and yet invisible for countless ages, that had been before the intellectual eyes of myriads day after day, hour after hour. The veriest savage who used stone arrows to shoot prehistoric game must have been familiar with "Barbara" and "Celarent," and yet he knew it not, though he won his dinner and preserved his life by this knowledge that was concealed from himself. The analogies were indeed innumerable. How many apples had fallen to the ground before the law of gravitation was enunciated? How often had the power of steam been perceived before the obvious application was disclosed? And man had gazed at the earth and sky, at the clouds and the woods, the seas and the rivers for innumerable ages before the mystery and the beauty of the world were really manifested in the work of Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Turner.

At this point Meyrick paused for a while in his main argument to follow a curious byway of thought. How far, he asked, were we to suppose that much that was not expressed was still felt and experienced—suppressed perhaps out of deference to convention, or from fear of consequences? Here was an obscure point which seemed to invite endless inquiry, on which it was impossible to dogmatise. For instance, you might investigate the marriage customs of some race more or less primitive, you might satisfy yourself that to all intents and purposes marriage and giving in marriage in the race in question were as prosaic, as much a matter of business as pig-dealing in Wiltshire; and yet from the heart of this tribe of chafferers in women there might surge up a song that expressed all the mystic passion of love. "Sometimes, perhaps, they simply bargain for a snug homestead, for well-roofed barns and a pot that shall always have enough of common food within it; and, amazed, they find themselves denizens of Paradise, partakers of magic food and enchanted drink." In a sense, the courtship of Portia by Bassanio was a squalid fortune-hunt, and yet there were lines that spoke nobly of the *latens deitas*. Perhaps there were many men of the eighteenth century who were thrilled to the heart by the ineffable mystery and beauty of the Gothic work, but they were ashamed to make the confession, to write themselves down as lovers of ignorance and barbarism in art. It was odd, by the way, to note that a sham love, a sham appreciation of the Gothic was a worse foe than blank ignorance and contempt; nothing could have concealed or depraved the true mystery so effectually as the fooleries of Horace Walpole, nothing could make sensible people long for a square meeting-house with square windows so effectually as the ghastly modern parodies of Pointed architecture which had been sown broadcast over England. And the "restorers" had done more harm to the work that they professed to love than all the villainies and wreckings and profanations of "Reformers"

and Puritans, than all the centuries of contempt, and whitewash, and neglect. Here Meyrick has pencilled a brief note on the margin of the article:

Qy. I wonder whether this is not more important than it appeared to me when I wrote this essay. For instance, is there not some analogy between "Walpole Gothic" and the work of certain erotic poets?

Proceeding in the main argument, Meyrick argues that it is hardly conceivable that the heart of man had remained cold to the great sacrament of the world till 1790; the glory of dawn and sunset, the terror and splendour of mountains and seas, the shadow of the woods in summer, the incantation of scented nights could not have been wholly without witnesses. No doubt there were hints of this universal mystery written in Hebrew and Greek and Latin; still, they were but hints, and the full expression—or, rather, the approximately full expression—had been reserved to a late day:

And yet; how many men and women must have *felt* all this—all that Coleridge and Wordsworth, Keats and Tennyson have written—and have lacked words or courage to express it. I wonder how much treasure we have lost, how much treasure we lose daily from this lack of courage, from this fear of telling the great and incredible dreams which apparently contradict sense and experience, science and convention; reason itself; and yet are perfect wisdom, perfect beauty. Tertullian's *Credo quia impossibile* is not merely sound theology; it is the basis of all true sapience, of Life and of Art alike. The Knight Errant's adventure of the Magic Boat without oar or sails is but the type of all true thinking, of the only adventure of life that is worth experiencing. In the Eastern Tale Joudar was assailed by all sorts of terrible phantoms, by wild beasts and armed men, who threatened him; and his quest was hopeless if once he forgot that these things were phantoms. Last of all came the appearance of his own mother pleading with him; her, too, he was to neglect and pass by. Here be symbols for them that can understand.

So the essay moves to its extraordinary conclusion, the high probability of a universal, or all but universal "ignorance" or "blindness" being, in the writer's opinion, established by the arguments that have been indicated; Meyrick urges that all manner of mysteries, splendours, beauties, delights may be—nay are—present to us, before our eyes, heard with our ears, sensibly and physically apprehended by us—and yet the Object or Objects which we see and apprehend after a certain sort are strangely withheld from us: we behold and see not, hear the Nuptial Song of R. Eleazar as savages would hear the symphonies of Beethoven, lay hands upon incredible treasures after the fashion of thieves who throw precious antique work into the melting-pot; and read at last the Great Incantation by which the worlds were made as a Recipe in the Cookery Book:

We may be sure of this, at all events, that the matter of the great work (to use the terms of the spagyric art) is no strange rarity hidden in some most secret corner of the world, or in some concealed corner of the mind. Though it be secret, yet it is everywhere seen, though it be occult, yet it is not to be sought amongst "Occultists." It is rather, to quote the alchemists again, the most common thing in all the wide world, and though it be hidden from all, yet no man is ignorant of it, no man can fail to be possessed of it, and, being possessed of it, truly to comprehend it if light be given him. It is everywhere spoken of, yet everywhere ignored, everywhere it is worshipped, and everywhere defiled, everywhere it is sought, and they that seek turn their faces away from it. They dig for it deep in the earth, and in digging trample it under foot; they would place it in a shrine, and they cast it forth into the mire; they strive to make them vestments for a high service, and appear in foul rags and wretched nakedness. In one place chiefly the word of it may be learnt, and in this place least of all does any one hope to behold it. But he who holds this treasure has conquered the world. It is given to the simple.

The article appeared, as has been said, in a magazine of the highest respectability; it was a good deal noticed and commented on as "a passionate and eloquent appeal for the appreciation of beauty in common things." It was only some year or two later, when Meyrick had published his first story, the "Rosa Mundi," that people began to put two and two together, and it was generally felt that

his ideas were "not quite nice." It must not be supposed that the theory of the essay was at all understood, but in certain instances there were *i's* in the article and dots in the romance, and the most unpleasant conclusions were drawn.

ARTHUR MACHEN.

THE CHELSEA PAGEANT

HISTORIC ground—the phrase is one that we have heard much of late, and it means much or little precisely in the degree in which one realises what "history" means. The "histories" which were inflicted on us at school were one thing; the history that we feel is another. It is possible to repeat with mathematical accuracy every "date" in English history, from Julius Caesar to the South African war, without possessing the smallest appreciation of history. It is equally possible to have a real and intimate knowledge of the processes of national development without feeling any of the glamour of the past. Our school histories were no doubt accurate, and some of them were written by very learned and worthy men. Their advance was orderly and definite, their instructional value was generally *nil*. Alarums and excursions, wars and rumours of wars, clashed and sounded in empty space, like the Wild Huntsman's hounds, coming from nowhere, tending nowhither, over our heads in the darkness of uncomprehending night. Men and women of flesh and blood had no part or lot in such history. If our history was illustrated at all, it was by jejune cuts of "a knight of the period," or "Richard II., from his tomb," or something of the kind. And even with such poor material at our command how eagerly we seized upon anything, such as Richard II.'s little forked beard or Henry IV.'s turban and liripipe, to ascribe some human individuality to these ghosts of a rather dull play.

To me the revelation of history first came in other lands, and it was not till long afterwards that I realised how closely history is always bound up in individual minds with its individual figures, and with the background of their lives. For, standing upon the uppermost step of the Propylaea, on the Acropolis of Athens, I saw the setting sun shine blood-red upon the Bay of Salamis; and suddenly fancy filled the bay with huddled Greek ships, waiting for the friendly shelter of night. Soon it would be dark enough for the schoolmaster's cock-boat to slip to and fro between fleet and fleet, and the Persian Armada would close in; and Themistocles, even while he girded against the gibes of the Corinthians, would be waiting for the dawn to see his purpose accomplished. And in the whirl and press of battle, it was the god-sent messenger who stayed Adeimantos, the ruthless bravery of Artemisia—the incidents, and not the whole—that came as vivid pictures before my eyes. The larger issue was not forgotten, but all the better realised, for that the struggle had become for the first time an affair of human beings, not merely of states and nations.

The plain fact is that we cannot care for history except so far as we can visualise both its theatre and its actors. To reap its full meed of memory a name must have its local habitation. While we forget Lucy Price, we remember Nell Gwynn, because she was Nell of Drury Lane. Thames bargemen remember St. Thomas to this day—at Lambeth, and nowhere else; to most of us Canterbury suggests immediately St. Thomas's martyrdom and Chaucer's Pilgrims. The fame of this, that, and the other place rests not so much on the deeds that have been done thereat, but on the men and women who have done or suffered those deeds, and the most earnest historian of great issues will turn aside to sketch a character—to portray an individual.

So, then, nor places, nor people, nor deeds by themselves make history, but the intimate association of all three. Call it parochialism if you will; there is such a thing as an over-large imperialism, the imperialism of little Johnny-head-in-air.

Chelsea offers us a pageant, and surely no other corner of London's world has a more intimate call upon our interest. The name conjures up, even to those outside the charmed circle of Mr. Quinn and the half-dozen enthusiasts to whom knowledge is allowed by the "booklet" of the promoters, visions of a kaleidoscopic past. Much remains of the old setting. Chelsea Hospital, Chelsea Old Church, and Ranelagh, the scene of the pageant itself—these are not yet modernised out of all knowledge. And if More and Henry VIII. have faded from local tradition in a great degree, the shades of Charles II. and Nell Gwynn still jostle those of Pope and Gay, Addison and Steele, in the memories of the uninformed. Doggett's Coat and Badge are a reality to the watermen of to-day, and the "poor soldiers, broke in our wars," may still read "Condidit Carolus Secundus" on the walls of their haven of rest. The incidents of Chelsea's history are all quiet, sober, even domestic; but they present to us, in a pleasant setting, the human side of personages great in the history of an outer world, and their value lies therein.

The "episodes" of this pageant are to be eight in number. They range from the invasion of Julius Caesar to a Venetian *fête* in Ranelagh Gardens, and, with the exception of the episode of the foundation of the Hospital (which will be presented in the Hospital grounds), they will be played in Ranelagh Gardens. There is a great gap in the sequence of the scenes, for Chelsea was a very unobtrusive village in its younger days; and perhaps it is a pity that Julius Caesar should have been dragged in by the heels, as it were, with the over-confident assertion that "it is sufficient to say that the Ford of Chelsea is now generally accepted as the ford referred to by Caesar in his account" of the crossing of the Thames. As a matter of fact, it is to be feared that the reverse is the case, and that Chelsea's claim to the distinction is now generally rejected. Certainly, at any rate, the evidence on behalf either of Brentford or Halliford is better than that which Chelsea can show. But even so apparently important a point as this is not vital. The fact to be driven home is that Caesar crossed the Thames; whether he did so at Chelsea, or Brentford, or Hampton, or Halliford matters little, and at least there was for centuries a ford at Chelsea. Caesar's vivid picture of horse and foot surging across the staked ford together, winning their way past the pointed stakes into the heart of the dismayed troops of Cassivelaunus, is given a *locale* and a setting in common talk, and history lives again. The exactitudes can come later.

The gap of eight centuries which intervenes between this scene and that of the "synod" called by Offa apparently left Chelsea undisturbed by events into which any of the personages of history can be brought. It is perhaps excusable on dramatic grounds to invest a prelate to whom has been attributed a disposition passive to the point of weakness, with a distinctly fiery nature. But neither does it appear that "Hibbert" is a seemly form for the name Higbert, nor is it plain on what grounds the tradition which makes Ealdulf the first Archbishop of Lichfield is rejected. And as for Peter's Pence, must we believe that Offa's gift had no precedent? What of Ina of Wessex and his offerings?

Again a leap, this time of about seven hundred years, and we are regaled with an interlude commemorative of the lordship of Sir Reginald Bray. From this point onwards Chelsea begins to "realise itself" in earnest. Naturally, in the sixteenth century Sir Thomas More and his family form the centre of the principal episode. Erasmus and Holbein figure among the characters, but we miss Dean Colet, who surely deserves a place, both by virtue of his name and of his friendships. The two scenes, of More's elevation and of his fall, form a good dramatic contrast, and, it is to be anticipated, will form the strongest episode in the pageant, whose chief weakness as a whole lies in a lack of dramatic force.

The days of Charles II. are a pageant in themselves, and most of the figures in the episode of the founding of the Hospital are familiar enough. And the localised folk-

tale of Nell Gwynn and the handkerchief, though it has its analogy in almost every tongue on earth, is none the less a bit of old Chelsea that it would have been sacrilege to overlook. As written, so also acted legend is the salt of history—and is generally quite as true and much more important.

The promoters of the pageant have disarmed criticism by a frank avowal of their inability to present every episode in Chelsea history that was worthy of presentation. But very sadly indeed we miss the "Physick Garden." Perhaps the Committee owe Sir Hans Sloane a grudge for having pulled down More's house. But we look in vain for the meeting of Sloane and Linnæus; for the visit of Sir Henry Goodriche, bearing in triumph the first Ribston pippin that ever grew on English soil; or for any hint that Chelsea could boast a greenhouse over which only that at Oxford could claim seniority. But we must not grumble; there are good things in plenty in the pageant as it stands. And if the estimate of history suggested in this article is correct, we may safely anticipate that the personages whom the authors have caused to step out of the pages of history into the glare of modern day will bring with them sympathy with, and understanding of the men and women of the long past days such as come from no mere reading. Life is not in the library, but in the fields and in the haunts of men.

If the Chelsea pageant is not the success that the spirit of its conception promises, it will be a matter for wonder as much as for regret. For one factor alone seems uncertain, and nothing can clear up the doubt beforehand. Queen Elizabeth had the "Queen's Elms" for royal shelter when she visited Chelsea. Let us hope that we shall not all need elms of our own when we go to see Queen Elizabeth there.

FREEMASONRY AND THE SCHOOLS

THE *Correspondant* of Paris publishes an article by M. de la Guillonière upon the class-books used in the primary schools in France. It exposes by documentary evidence the false pretence of scientific impartiality put forth by its authors, and shows the steps by which the gradual dechristianisation of France is being accomplished under the auspices of the French Lodges. The first attempts of the Freethinkers to corrupt the minds of school-children was in 1880. Previous to this date the school-books set forth the duty of mankind towards God, but in the edition of the Children's Grammar adopted in 1882, M. de la Guillonière says:

Instead of the verses upon the "Goodness of God" which appeared in previous editions, there was substituted a poem upon "The Donkey's Flower, the Thistle." The Creator was replaced by Jupiter, and Chateaubriand's "Hymn to the Eternal" gave place to "A melodious hymn."

In 1890 further progress was made, the Masonic Lodges had declared open war against Christian doctrine and offered a prize for the composition of a lay manual of morals, the use of which should be obligatory in all the schools throughout France, in opposition to the Catholic Catechism. This offer, however, did not produce any work which could be publicly avowed and adopted, so another method was tried. A series of classical text-books was introduced into the schools which were quite free from any religious taint. On the 30th of March, 1904, the heads of the Lodges congratulated themselves upon their success in the schools:

It is enough (they said) to mention the late works of Hervé, Aulard, and Bayet to show that the school-books now used are written in a scientific and rationalist spirit.

Among the works which were thus praised by the avowed enemies of the Christian religion the *Correspondant* refers especially to the "Manual of Civic Morals" of M. Bayet, of which more than 60,000 copies were used by children from six to thirteen years of age:

We do not think (says M. de la Guillonière) that it would be possible to bring together in the same number of lessons more direct attacks against God and His ministers, calumnies against Catholics, inversions of historic truth, and hatred of France, and to display at the same time so much spurious science.

This is the "scientific and impartial system of education" which is provided by the French Government.

In one lesson the pupils are taught to distinguish between things which can be known and others which cannot ever be known. In the second category are classed statements which cannot be scientifically proved:

For instance, we know that men die, but we do not know scientifically what becomes of them after their death.

The same formula is repeated on the question of our knowing whether after death there is or is not another life.

Further (the Manual says), we do not know scientifically whether God exists, or whether He does not. Finally, all these things are classed under one word, "the unknowable," which especially includes the existence of God.

Can it be surprising that a generation of French children who have been educated upon principles such as these, have become atheists or at least sceptics and haters of religion? It is the logical result of that system of secular education which Mr. Reginald McKenna was so anxious to introduce into the public schools of England.

ARCHIBALD J. DUNN.

SHORTER REVIEWS

India's Saint and the Viceroy. By S. S. THORBURN
(Edinburgh and London: W. Blackwood and Sons.)

"THEY understood" (v. p. 266)—it is more than we do! Words fail us to describe our mystification after wandering for hours (or is it days?) in Mr. S. S. Thorburn's Indian maze, and we must borrow without permission from Alice in Wonderland's vocabulary. "'Curiouser and Curiouser,'" remarked Alice—and "'Curiouser and Curiouser and Curiouser'" do we, of the "Viceroy," the "Viceroy's" daughter, and the "India's Saint" (?) of Mr. Thorburn's imagination.

With the dedication of his book to Christian Scientists, etc., the puzzle begins; for after reading towards the end of the story (pp. 291 *seq.*) how the hero (or, rather, one of the heroes, because Mr. Thorburn has elected to have two, the "Saint," Mr. Cosmo Sorel, and Colonel Angus Hamilton) performs a miracle of a most positive kind, parodying, if one can so use the word, one of our Lord's miracles recounted in the Gospels—after reading this we observe, with fresh wonder, that Mr. Thorburn in the dedication takes care to remark that he does not believe in the Christian Scientist claim to possession of spiritual power over physical disease!

If the author only wished to air his views on Christian Science, pp. 197 and 220, together with the Preface, would have sufficed. If he has desired to give John Bull at home an idea of how Viceroy reigns representatively for him in India, we think even Paget, M.P., might have succeeded better. Where on earth has he picked his model for a Viceroy—the impossible "Lord Eskmore," whose only idea is to pose as India's God to the Indians—absorbed in the contemplation of his family's importance (of which, by the way, without any warning whatever, the "Saint" Sorel suddenly claims to be the head and missing heir to title, and is accepted without demur or proof as such by the credulous Viceroy!)—and discussing openly before his still more impossible daughter, Lady Beatrice, the most important and (should be) confidential dispatches relating to frontier wars, etc.? "Lady Beatrice," who alternates between her "Saint" and—as the author calls him—"her other lover," Colonel Hamilton, has that coyness

of manner which we are in the habit of attributing to the 'Arriets of Margate (cp. pp. 232-3), and as to Mr. Cosmo Sorel, the millionaire Christian Scientist!—again words fail us, and again "Curiouser, Curiouser," is all we can murmur.

Mr. Thorburn's experience in officialdom in India enables him to describe admirably the kind of Circumlocution Office dispatch which distracts hard-working Indian civilians in their districts, but he goes out of his way to find fault invariably with the Indian Government in everything it does. He says one or two apt things regarding the mixed racial problems of India—(p. 57) "The Eurasians are 'the coffee-cream derelicts of miscegenation in India';" (p. 170) "What's a name in this land of mixed pickles?" and again (p. 63), Sorel "as an Englishman of fabulous wealth was also a phenomenon as rare as a contented Babu in Bengal!" One scarcely needs to have been in Bengal to appreciate the pithiness of this simile!

There is, too, a rather good description of a big polo match (pp. 77 seq.). These and a few more such sprinklings alone save the book from immediate condemnation, in our judgment, and we fear Mr. Thorburn, like his "Saint" of India on p. 165, will "be pained at the perception of the fact" that we are not "spiritually-minded," or, at any rate, not sufficiently so to feel anything else save thankful to have emerged at last out of this meaningless maze.

The Indian Countryside. By PERCIVAL O'CONNOR. (Brown, Langham and Co.)

THIS is a quiet, continuous "babbling of brooks and streams"—or their Indian equivalents, native tanks and wells. Mr. O'Connor says nothing very striking or new—his is a simple "calendar and diary" of camp-life and riding through the central districts of Upper Hindostan. The book is quite pleasant reading, and good print and some pleasing photographs make up for a good deal of discursiveness. The author, too, has the great merit not always to be found with Anglo-Indians, of not finding fault with all that is Indian and not Anglo, and he is evidently full of sympathy for the really hard-working and most patient "Ram Bux," the native peasantry, who are only too often the "bondslaves" of the native moneylenders.

Prome et Samara. Par GÉNÉRAL L. DE BEYLIÉ. (Paris: Leroux, n.p.)

GENERAL DE BEYLIÉ presents, both in his individuality and in his work, a type of archæologist peculiarly French. We can hardly imagine an Englishman of his profession and of his temperament spending a leave all too short in a breathless dash from home to Burma and from Burma to Mesopotamia in search of material for a peculiarly abstruse phrase of Asiatic architectural development. Nor, if we were so fortunate as to discover that we owned such a compatriot, should we expect to find in him a bubbling spring of humour and a broad sense of human sympathy. Indeed, we doubt whether such a combination of qualities would be possible in any but a Frenchman, least of all in conjunction with those delightful touches of *naïveté* and of domestic sentiment which are betrayed in the work of this genial gentleman.

There are many works upon archæology in many languages which impress us with a sense of the patience and erudition of their authors; many which rouse in us a fighting instinct, driving us to an emphasis of dissent perhaps disproportionate to their value; some convincing to the point of forcing us to the abdication of all independent opinion; but few, too few, are those which give us joy of the personality of the author. Honestly, after reading this book, we desire most ardently the acquaintance of M. de Beylié. We feel sure that the generous tribute that he pays in these pages to the courtesy of British officials in India and Burma would be heartily reciprocated by those who had the pleasure of being of service to the soldier-archæologist.

If it be thought that this reference to an author's personality is out of place in a review of his work, we would

recommend objectors to turn to that work for themselves, and to realise in doing so to how great an extent the opinions of the author gain, if not in weight, at all events in interest, by reason of the personal element which is introduced into the form of their presentation.

The paper is divided into three sections. The first is a diary of the journey, and, naturally, it is in this section that the writer is revealed to us. The two last sections deal with his researches—architectural for the most part—in Burma and Mesopotamia respectively. A passage or two, quoted from the first part, will, we think, whet the appetite for more:

6 janvier, Calcutta. Ville banale: hôtels médiocres, aucune distraction le soir. Je me hâte de retenir ma place sur le paquebot de Rangoon. De jeunes artistes français donnent un concert à mon hôtel. Je cause avec le basson: "êtes vous content?"—"Oh oui, mais une chose me chiffonne: quand nous jouons de la musique classique, les Anglais causent à haute voix et on ne nous entend pas. En revanche, lorsque nous jouons de la musique légère et connue, les spectateurs nous accompagnent en sifflant et en frappant le pied. C'est agaçant!"

On the same page is a good story:

A Khan, musulman richissime de Bombay, dernier descendant du célèbre roi des Assassins est sujet anglais; il reçoit de l'argent de tous ses partisans, qui le considèrent comme un être surnaturel. Dernièrement il fût très étonné de ne pas recevoir le subside annuel de ses coreligionnaires de Zanzibar. Il leur fit l'observation et ceux-ci répondirent qu'ils avaient confié leurs cotisations à la mer. "Vous avez bien fait, leur dit-il, et l'argent m'est effectivement arrivé, seulement j'ignorais qui me l'avait envoyé. Désormais confiez, je vous prie, vos subsides à la poste, de cette façon vous serez en possession d'un reçu et moi-même j'aurai la preuve que l'argent vient bien de vous."

One more charming remark:

Nous jetons l'ancre devant Bassorah. On nous met en quarantaine sous prétexte que la peste règne aux Indes. Elle y règne, en effet, mais elle règne aussi en Mésopotamie, et l'on s'explique difficilement pourquoi les autorités locales prennent tant de précautions contre la peste indienne lorsqu'ils sont déjà en possession de la peste mésopotamienne. Affaire de goût.

The two monographs upon the excavations undertaken by General de Beylié at Prome, and upon his researches into the sources of Abassid architecture are careful and conscientious records of workmanlike research, and are profusely illustrated by excellent photographs. The extreme rapidity of the author's movements have prevented him from doing much more than to provide the material for more leisured workers, but it is certainly to him that is due the indication of the lines upon which useful work can be pursued. And any step towards clearing up the vexed question of the interplay of artistic—and especially of architectural—influences between the races of nearer and further Asia is a step taken in so little frequented a path as to be practically pioneer work. General de Beylié's temperament and intellectual calibre seem especially to fit him for the rapid transitions from one aspect to another of these developments, which alone can result in an effectual comparison of their inter-relation. Though, as he himself modestly admits, this publication scarcely attains to the dimensions of a "book," it is one which no one engaged in the study of Asiatic art can afford to neglect.

The Life and Times of Nicholas Ferrar. By H. P. K. SKIPTON. (Mowbray and Co., 3s. 6d.)

EVERYONE knows something of Nicholas Ferrar and Little Gidding. The subject after being lost sight of for several years was brought again into favour by that wonderful and delightful work "John Inglesant." Since then there has been a considerable variety of writing upon this fascinating subject. The late Bishop Creighton supplied a convenient summary of the Life and Times of Nicholas Ferrar in the "Dictionary of National Biography." Mr. Cyril Davenport published a monograph in 1896 upon the "Little Gidding Bindings." Captain Acland brought out an excellent sketch of "Little Gidding and its Inmates," through the S.P.C.K., in 1903. There have also appeared in recent

years various magazine articles of some merit, and occasionally supplying new material. No excuse, however, is necessary for producing a fresh book upon a subject so peculiarly fascinating to Church-folk, and, indeed, to all who can appreciate a devout and exemplary life, in times of great difficulty, on unusual lines. We have therefore no hesitation in cordially commending the two hundred pages of Mr. Skipton's work. Herein he gathers together almost all that is known of Nicholas Ferrar—his upbringing, his *Wanderjahre*, his connection with the Virginia Company, his establishment of the "Armenian Nunnery" at Little Gidding in 1624-6, the rule of life for this little community, his friendships and visitors, his last years, and the dark days at Little Gidding from 1641-1647, when the political and anti-religious storm which was then darkening the country raged with Puritan malevolence around this innocent sanctuary. The last words of this well-written, well-illustrated, and attractive-looking book are amply justified, wherein Mr. Skipton writes:

The Church will now and always inscribe high in her roll of those who, by their example, have moulded her polity and practice, and by their personal holiness have impelled her in the paths of spiritual progress, the name of Nicholas Ferrar.

In and Around the Isle of Purbeck. By IDA WOODWARD. With Thirty-six Plates in colour by J. W. G. BOND. (John Lane, 21s. net.)

BOOKS of coloured illustrations of English scenery are multiplying at a prodigious rate. This volume as to the south-east corner of Dorset is not one of the best—and certainly not one of the worst—of its sort. We suppose that in all such cases the pictures are first painted, and then some one is found to write the descriptive letterpress. At any rate, in this instance, as in most of the like cases, the coloured plates are the most attractive part of the volume, and for their sake the carelessness and insufficiency of the text may be pardoned. Those who love this charming part of Dorsetshire will be glad to have so many pleasant pictures of its richly varied landscapes and interesting remains. The seaboard of the Isle of Purbeck is second to none of like extent throughout the whole coast-line of England in its remarkable diversity, brightness of colouring, and occasional grandeur. Mr. Bond is to be congratulated on the pictures he gives us of the Purbeck Hills from Poole Harbour, of Chapman's Pool, of Kimmeridge Bay, of Poole Harbour from Grange Hill, of Poole Harbour from Rempston Heath, and of Studland Bay. Contrariwise, he has failed to reproduce the remarkable colourings and dignified effects of Worbarrow Bay, which is, to our mind, by far the finest bit of coast scenery throughout the whole of the southern sea-board of England until the Lizard is reached. Nor do the smaller pictures of St. Aldhelm's Head or of the Dancing Ledge, Langton Matravers, yield much satisfaction. There is, too, occasional disappointment in connection with the reproductions of buildings; this is notably the case with the highly attractive old manor house of Godlingston, whilst the still older house of Barneston is painted from its least attractive side. Taken, however, as a whole, this bright group of Purbeck pictures has a distinct value of its own, and cannot fail to act as a pleasurable stay to the memory of those who are occasional visitors to Swanage, Studland, or Corfe Castle.

The letterpress contains a great deal of diligently compiled material, but will probably prove unsatisfying to well-informed persons or to careful readers who desire to know much of this singularly interesting historic district, which abounds in a great variety of archaeological remains. The "Forest" story of the Isle of Purbeck—it was all under forest law in the time of King John—is almost wholly neglected, and no effort has been made to give any accurate or original information as to the quarrying and early wide use of Purbeck marble. There are several blunders in the architectural accounts and suggested dates of the churches of Studland, Worth, Matravers, and Swanage, as well as of the manor houses of Godlingston and Barneston. The true history of the Isle of Purbeck, a most fascinating subject, yet remains to be written.

FICTION

Mr. Crewe's Career. By WINSTON CHURCHILL. (Macmillan and Co., 6s.)

WE shall be greatly surprised if Mr. Winston Churchill's latest novel does not have the effect of seriously offending many—if not the majority—of his fellow-countrymen. Let it be said at once that it is a novel of extraordinary power, a novel written with an incisive force and directness that is rare in contemporary fiction. Unlike "The Metropolis," it is not a mere magnified tract. It is, on the contrary, a genuine work of art, a work planned on an almost epic scale, every character in which is impressed with an unmistakable individuality. For this very reason it is likely to be the deadlier in its effect. Dedicated to "the men who in every State of the Union are engaged in the struggle for purer politics," this book is a scathing and unsparing indictment of American political methods. Mr. Churchill writes with a restrained fury, and with something of the fervour of the prophet, as he unfolds this sordid drama of fraud, misgovernment, and chicanery. The picture is appalling in its verisimilitude. We see votes bought and sold, honour held but lightly, and justice prostituted at the bidding of a powerful and unscrupulous interest. The Mr. Crewe who gives his name to the title—he is very far indeed from being the hero—is a Fool, with a monumental F. He is the sort of man, in fact, of whom the short-sighted and the flatterer are apt to remark that he is very far indeed from being a fool. We meet him first as an aspirant for Congress; we leave him as an unsuccessful candidate for the Senate. He has allied himself with the forces of Reform, and has been hopelessly beaten by the stronger and abler forces of Reaction. But the real interest of the story lies with Austen Vane, who is evidently meant to typify a new spirit in American politics—a spirit that may yet cleanse the Augean stables of corruption. To us he stands for an America that is not yet born, but if Mr. Churchill is able to discern on the political horizon a cloud no bigger than a man's hand, we wish him joy of his discovery. The book, it should be said, has a very real human interest, and in Victoria Flint the author has created a character of unforgettable charm. But for us its chief attraction lies in the presentment of a struggle between two opposing schools of politics, which is seen in these pages as an aspect of the eternal duel between right and wrong. The possible effect of such a book can be only dimly surmised—it may be that the warning has come too late—but Mr. Churchill is to be heartily congratulated on his candour, courage, and public spirit; congratulated, too, on the production of one of the most engrossing novels that have been written for some considerable time.

The Little God's Drum. By RALPH STRAUS. (Chatto and Windus, 6s.)

THERE is a spurious air of cleverness about "The Little God's Drum" which raises the expectations of the hopeful reader and lures him on from page to page in the fond belief that sooner or later some sparkling witticism will meet his eye. But he is doomed to disappointment. All through the book the author strains after a brilliancy to which, alas! he never attains, but so infectious are his optimistic efforts that the reader plods on to the bitter end, through dialogue which just falls short of being witty and which does not pretend to be natural, only to realise as he reads the last tame sentence that he has been betrayed into a careful perusal of a very ordinary work. The one redeeming feature in the book is the character of Tony Wrynge. He alone is allowed to be natural and to speak with the tongue of a mere man instead of emitting laboured and pointless epigrams.

Young Lord Stranleigh. By ROBERT BARR. (Ward Lock, 6s.)

ALL Mr. Barr's books are readable, and "Young Lord Stranleigh" is no exception to the rule. The plot is both ingenious and satisfactory. Lord Stranleigh, an appa-

rently rather simple-minded and inane young *flâneur*, purchases a goldmine, which brings him into contact with a particularly repulsive Hebrew financier, who seems endowed with superhuman ingenuity. He not only reduces this astute person to utter confusion, but crowns his career by sauntering into the Bank of England at a moment of financial crisis and, by the timely present of a few large bars of gold, saving the fortunes of his country. It is a pity that this knight-errant is not more prepossessing. By way of emphasising his aristocratic demeanour Mr. Barr has made him consistently and offensively insolent to every one with whom he comes in contact. It is difficult to understand why he is not knocked down and disabled long before his plans are perfected. We can only imagine that he is saved by a "singularly winning smile," which is mentioned as one of his attributes.

The Watcher of the Plains. By RIDGWELL CULLUM. (Chapman and Hall, 6s.)

ONLY a daring writer like Mr. Cullum would have shed so much blood to bring his hero and heroine together. All the trouble arises from the fact that Nevil Steyne is unreasonable enough to covet the whole of his father's fortune instead of a half-share, and when Colonel Raynor, his brother, writes to say that he is coming to hand over his share Nevil plots with the Indians for the murder of the colonel, his wife and child, thus leaving his way clear to the estates. The party duly encounters the red men, and, with gruesome detail, Mr. Cullum tells of the shooting of Mrs. Raynor by her husband and his attempt to perform the same service for Marjorie. She escapes, however, and is heroically rescued from an Indian chief by Seth, who is clearly destined to be her husband. After the murders have been got rid of, Mr. Cullum becomes more interesting, and the freshness with which he depicts the characters of an American farm makes very enjoyable reading. Nevil Steyne, however, is a somewhat incomprehensible figure, for he does not stir from the neighbourhood when he has accomplished his desire. How Seth proved Marjorie's title to her father's estate, how she went to England and came back again, together with a full account of the love-making, which was principally on the girl's side, all these things are faithfully described by the author, whose book is, perhaps, the more readable because it is obviously so unsophisticated. Stories about Red Indians will always have a fascination for some people, and "The Watchers of the Plains" may achieve popularity for this reason. It must be said, however, that Mr. Cullum writes better when dealing with "white folk," and if he had given us more little character sketches, such as "Rube" and "Ma," we should have been able to rank his production higher.

Corry Thorndike. By WINIFRED CRISPE. (Hurst and Blackett, 6s.)

STARTING with a rather unpleasant theme, Miss Crispe has developed her story most pleasantly. A *mariage de convenance* of a more than usually sordid kind becomes a real marriage of love, after a conflict between two very proud natures, the stages of which are clearly and reasonably shown.

In the beginning Sir Eden Gresham is involved in an intrigue with Mrs. Vanderberg, and people are talking. Vanderberg is coming home, and before gossip can reach his ears something must be done to prove its falsity when he begins to suspect the truth. So Mrs. Vanderberg hits on a most ingenious plan to save her name. Sir Eden must become engaged to be married—must, in fact, be married almost immediately. There is a girl eminently suitable—she is indeed already in love with Sir Eden, and one of Mrs. Vanderberg's greatest friends. For a time Eden hesitates; he does not want to be married; but at last he agrees on condition that Judith knows the real truth, and consents with that knowledge. If Mrs. Vanderberg will arrange everything on these lines he will make the sacrifice. Mrs. Vanderberg promises to explain everything to Judith; but of course

she does not, and Judith only learns the truth after marriage. Her husband, however, believes that she knows, and despises her accordingly. Consequently he rejects her love at the first, and when he begins to love her in his turn her pride has been hurt too much, and knowing now why he has married her, she will not believe in his sincerity. Happily for both, Miss Crispe has given them a guardian angel, Corry Thorndike. The latter is rather an idealised character; but, in spite of his somewhat abnormal virtues, Miss Crispe succeeds in keeping him within the bounds of possibility if not of probability. How he succeeds in bringing husband and wife together may be learnt from the book. The reader will be rewarded with an interesting study of emotions and will not regret the time spent, but will follow keenly the struggle on both sides between pride and love.

The Wild Widow. By GERTIE DE S. WENTWORTH-JAMES. (Werner Laurie, 6s.)

WE see, on glancing at the modest advertisement on the cover of "The Wild Widow," that "the situations are poignant and a most astounding surprise is revealed in the last chapter." If poignant were another word for vulgar we should cordially endorse the statement, but on referring to the dictionary we find that the word signifies "sharp or penetrating." We cannot see anything either sharp or penetrating in the shady and commonplace adventures of the unscrupulous widow, who, of course, is only a widow in the eyes of the company which has been unfortunate enough to insure her husband's life. As to the "astounding surprise," it was unfortunately "revealed" to us at the end of the third chapter instead of in the last. The principal characters are the widow, who possesses "a beautiful waist with a natural frontal dip," a maiden with "straying Empire curls," a gentleman with an "immoral mouth," and "a nice man." Every page is beautifully adorned with italics and many familiar French idioms are skilfully introduced into the dialogue.

DRAMA

"LINKS" AT THE STAGE SOCIETY

IT is now some years since this Society produced *The Good Hope*, by the Dutch playwright Herman Heijermans, which made so great an impression both then and later when Miss Ellen Terry took it on tour. *Links* is by the same author. It has much of the same pessimistic view of life; there is the same tragic feeling pervading the whole play; men and women, as Mr. Heijermans sees them, are either avaricious and self-seeking and unscrupulous, or else the victims of such greed. Consequently last Monday afternoon there were many present who found the play too harsh and too unsympathetic; but all the more should we be grateful to the Stage Society for producing works which make so limited an appeal.

Links is by no means a perfect play; there were times when we could not but feel that an unnecessary amount of detail was standing between us and the main issue, and there was at least one character whose importance in the scheme was practically nil. Furthermore really important matters seemed at the moment to be less important than they subsequently turned out to be. All this may be intentional on the part of the author, and it may be that the feeling of power and vividness which pervaded the whole performance was due to methods which seem at first sight to be more irritating than necessary.

The plot deals with the disappointments of Pancras Duif, who from very humble beginnings has built up an enormous business. He has been a widower for many years, and his children have not turned out to be very satisfactory—in fact, in a way it is the story of Lear without a Cordelia. Two of the sons have shown their real characters for some time, and now, during Pancras's illness

the eldest son, Henk, has managed to seize the management of the business; and so Pancras turns his thoughts to matrimony and wishes to marry his very interesting housekeeper. The family are, of course, up in arms, and are able, through their gross unscrupulousness, to find out from their father's papers things about the proposed wife which make it easy to get rid of her. The old man, when the play ends, is bereft of everything that could make life possible to him.

The characters of all the principal persons are most marvellously well drawn; and Pancras himself, a light-hearted, hard-working, and sincere old man, is particularly lifelike. The part was admirably played by Mr. J. Fisher White. No less admirable was Mr. Edmund Gwenn as the old man's brother, Hein, who, without joining in the conspiracy, is anxious to prevent Pancras or any one else from getting married. The three contemptible sons were played by Mr. Hubert Harben, Mr. Robert Atkins, and Mr. Leon Quatermaine; and three remarkable studies in villany they certainly were, but one could not help wondering if one old man was likely to be the father of three such dissimilar villains. Miss Edyth Latimer was singularly unequal as Marianne, the housekeeper. On the whole it was a fine restrained performance that was marred by a melodramatic passage, which, however, was greeted with great applause. How often does the "purple patch" ruin a work of art! There was plenty of good acting besides, though the actor who took the part of a brain specialist gave it much too farcical an aspect.

A. C.

"NAN"

It is a pity that more people did not realise that Mr. Masfield's tragedy was going into the bill of the Vedrenne-Barker *matinées* at the Haymarket. The play made a sensation when it was performed before the Pioneers, and certainly the small attendance on Tuesday afternoon was largely due to the inability of the management to make the production more widely known in the time at their disposal. The play is a reasonably fine one. It has some of the forcefulness which is essential to tragedy. The mere circumstances of the story are sordid and horrible. Nan Hardwicke's father has been hanged for sheepstealing, and she is living with her aunt, Mrs. Pargetter, who takes a fiend's delight in making her life miserable; her cousin Jenny creeps into her confidence to learn her lover's name; Dick, her lover, is falsehearted, and shames her before all her friends, leaving her, at the aunt's instigation, for Jenny. Then in the last Act an officer comes from London to say that Nan's father was hanged by mistake, and to bring £50, which is a small fortune, as compensation for Nan's loss. Dick immediately makes love to her, and she, outraged by his meanness, kills him, and goes out to drown herself in the Severn. The only person who has not treated her with almost inhuman brutality is an old fiddler, half-witted with age and sorrow. Under Mr. Masfield's treatment the play is neither sordid nor horrible. The meanness of Dick and the Pargetters is shown unflinchingly, but you are overwhelmed not by their meanness, but by the greatness and beauty of Nan, which is like a flame amid black darkness. And more than that. Just as in Nan's exaltation she is brought in touch with the mystery of life, which is all that the half-witted fiddler can see, so in witnessing the triumph which is Nan's withdrawal from life, you are brought in touch with the simple greatness of life, and the flame of beauty which burns inextinguishably in the blackest environment. The powers of evil and the powers of good are in conflict; evil at first seems suffocating and dominant; you can hardly bear its cruelty and strength. But slowly you are shown things at their proper value, and you feel all Nature and life is supporting Nan, and at last you feel not hatred but a profound pity for the poor mean creatures who are nearer death than life, though Nan has gone away to die, and they possess her money, and have apparently won their little victory.

Miss Lillah McCarthy played Nan. It is the best piece of work which she has yet done. Her performance left little to be desired; it was in the first Act astonishingly good, but in the love-scene in the second Act greater simplicity would have been more effective, and in the last Act there was not enough spiritual exaltation. She did not make Nan sufficiently subordinate to the old fiddler, whose truth she was for the first time seeing. Mr. Hignett played Gaffer Pearce, the old fiddler, very well, except that at times he emphasised the old man's senility unnecessarily, and became a little restless and at times inaudible in consequence. But he felt the poetry of the old man's utterances. Miss Mary Jerrold played the mean little friend, Jenny, almost perfectly. In some ways it was the most finished performance in the play. Nothing could have been better than the way she brought out Jenny's terror as Nan shows her her own little snake's soul. Miss Jerrold should do great things. The rest of the company played well, especially Mr. Hodges as William Pargetter and Mr. Anson in the difficult part of Dick.

H. DE S.

CORRESPONDENCE

SOCIALISM VERSUS CHRISTIANITY

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—I notice that a writer in your last week's issue asserts that the Socialist party has for one of its avowed aims the destruction of the Christian religion. I have been acquainted with Socialists now for the last three or four years, and have for about a year been one myself. I can therefore confidently assert that he is completely mistaken. It is only necessary to read the Socialist literature, the constitutional basis of Socialist societies, to talk to those who hold Socialist views, to find that, with hardly any exception, Christianity has just as much or as little to do with Socialism as it has to do with the cut-and-dried schemes of any other political party. If Socialists really did aim at the abolition of Christianity its opponents could well afford to leave it alone, for it would certainly accomplish its own destruction. Socialism is a scheme for taking land and capital out of private hands and transferring it to the public. It believes that by so doing only will the very glaring evils that oppress society be remedied. What Socialism does aim at is the abolition of capitalism—that is, wealth used to exploit and not to benefit human beings. As such it has attracted, and will continue to attract, many noble and fine spirits whose one object is the uplifting of their fellow-creatures.

W. H. PAINE, Curate of St. Mary's, Primrose Hill.

[We reply to this letter in "Life and Letters."—ED.]

SOCIALISM AND SUFFRAGITIS

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—The splendid boiling-down of unsubstantiated opinion in your article of comparison between Suffragettes and Socialists is, to any one whose experience warrants them to speak with knowledge, highly amusing.

No person, for instance, would for one minute suppose the several Societies now engaged in advocating for the franchise to include on an equal qualification with men, women, to be pro-Socialists, if he or she had any personal knowledge of the movement with which to be able to form anything like a correct idea of the general opinion of the members of such Societies.

This knowledge I claim to have, and I think that as an active worker in the cause I can speak, not perhaps with as much authority as some of my co-workers, but with a knowledge greater by far than any outsider.

In accordance with the general attitude of the Socialists as a whole, without distinction of this branch or that branch, they have shown themselves incapable, or at any rate unwilling, to co-operate with any movement which is but a "half-way house" to any reform which in its final or extreme stage they themselves may advocate.

Consequently, therefore, the Socialists have been one of the most bitter of the opponents of what has come to be known as "Limited Suffrage."

It is true that we have amongst the speakers of our movement several well-known Socialists who have been far-seeing enough to grasp the fact that a movement which advocated a more liberal representation to women than to men was as unjust as the state of the franchise at the present time, and doomed to failure. It is also true that a very large number of the leaders and of the members as a whole are in favour of citizen franchise, but the

composition of the societies is, so far as Socialists are concerned, numerically inconsiderable, and their numbers are far and away less than the support of either the Liberals or Conservatives in our ranks.

To those who have been favoured with a privilege enjoyed by few, Socialism is the spreading of that favour to the many, and those who advocate either that a privilege shall be abolished or that it shall become less of a monopoly are therefore Socialists, and, if this is the case, then your article is correct—women's franchise is Socialism, and its advocates are Socialists. But I repeat that Socialists, as a body, have opposed our movement, and our members and the members of the other Societies only contain a comparatively insignificant number of Socialists, and nothing but a very wide and absolutely incorrect definition of a Socialist could bring your article in any way into the line of fact.

H. MACKENZIE THEEDAM,
Men's League for Women's Suffrage.

34, Amwell Street, E.C., May 30, 1908.

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—As a Socialist I was charmed—that, as a man, being my principal function—by being credited with a feminine intellect, in the first quarter of the second column of the article "Socialism and Suffragitis," in the current issue of your gay periodical. And I have the true "blind instinct" that I am right in being charmed. To care nothing for reason—that were freedom indeed. A freedom I have at present in small measure; but I hope by the passage of years to attain to the finer verve, and share the upper strata with your contributor "A. D." He is more joyous and airier far than I. He is not even bound by fact. And for his arguments—well, were I not free from the grosser forms of logical restraint, I would credit "A. D." with female sex and incipient Socialism. I began his article at the end—as ladies begin novels—the method having some piquancy. One discovers the basic theme right away. In this case, for instance, one finds that "all that is fine and noble and lovely in this country" is being blighted and spoilt—which, as a Socialist, I cannot deny. Who are to blame? We are—I am—in part, it seems. Indeed? Really, I had no. . . . But read on. We—I—"have called forth the literature of Mr. Chesterton," and have "created the Suffragette."

Then half a column about Mr. Chesterton. Now Mr. Chesterton has recently, and at some length, explained that he is not a Socialist. It seemed obvious enough to us—to me. Why he did it I can't think—and out of his regular beat, too. So I will not bother any more about him. But the Suffragette, for whom I—we—are responsible (it is reiterated, "It is the Socialists, then, who are responsible for the Suffragettes")—what of her? Read back a little further. "Her disease is intimately connected with Socialism." Yes, yes; read on—back. "It is men, therefore, who are responsible for the Suffragette." But "A. D." said Socialists. Is "man" synonymous with Socialist? All men? Assuredly no; for that is a commonplace. But how are men responsible? Read on—back. Ha! a syllogism; because "even the Suffragette is a woman, and, being a woman, whether she knows it or not, she is engaged in the process of charming some one" (authority for this statement being found in the lines of Christina Rossetti beginning, "Woman was made for man's delight;" excellent lines!); and because "In the face of universal disgust and reprobation from man she simply could not exist. It is men, therefore, who are responsible for the Suffragette." Which really is not a commonplace. And so I am, Sir, your still charmed reader and confirmed subscriber,

A. B.

PS.—If you have room? Just to say that the instances of Suffragette repartee are really great. In the species shown the genus is foreshadowed—giving me huge joy. My disgust I share with "A. D."—without lessening its volume.

[We confess that we are unable to make head or tail of A. B.'s letter. In the words of the "Bab Ballads," "it is pretty, but we don't know what it means." Perhaps some of our readers may be more successful than we have been in deciphering "A. B." In any case, as "a charmed reader and confirmed subscriber," he is welcome to the space which his letter occupies.—ED.]

THE EVENING SUN

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—I read with considerable amusement your rapier-like stabbing of the New York "Stabber," the *Evening Sun*, in your issue of May 2nd. A word concerning this little sheet and its dam, the *Sun*—a morning paper—may not be inappropriate coming from a resident of New York and "in the know." It is not surprising that the *Sun* should deride the claims of Upton

Sinclair "to accuracy of any sort," since Mr. Sinclair in "The Jungle" showed up the rascality of the Chicago Beef Trust, and it is well known that the *Sun* is chief lackey to all Trusts.

I read the *Sun* for various reasons. First, because I like to see what the devil is doing in these parts. Second, to give the devil his due, the *Sun* is the best "put together" paper in New York. By this I mean the most symmetrically arranged as regards news, etc., and there is always a literary touch in every article that appears therein. At one time the *Sun* bore a legend on its margin "If you see it in the *Sun* it's so." That legend disappeared after its circulation had dwindled from a million a week, blazoned on bill-boards, to a size which it did not advertise. Thereupon, or some time thereafter, it got to be whispered about journalistic circles in New York, "If you see it in the *Sun* it's crow." The news that the *Sun* gives is true—it's another question whether the news will be allowed to get into its columns or not; but as to its leaders and political policy, the first are "colored," as Mr. District Attorney Jerome well says, and in both there is *suppressio veri*, not to say *expressio falsi*, which blot the otherwise learned and frequently witty articles. As for its political policy, it is the most treacherous back-stabber that ever appeared in New York journalism. Though a Democratic paper, it attempted to back for President of the United States General "Spoons" B. F. Butler, who was charged with stealing spoons in New Orleans during the Civil War. It again attempted to betray the Democracy by its long war on President Grover Cleveland. Both these treacheries were performed while the *Sun* was Democratic. When Bryan appeared the *Sun* turned coat and flopped over to the Republican side. But its diabolical nature—its taste for the blacking on the boot of a Trust magnate, and its spittle-licking tendency in the same gross quarter—forced it to its old trick of treachery and back-stabbing against the only President we have had worthy of the name—bar Cleveland—since Lincoln; of course I mean Theodore Roosevelt, and I am a life-long Democrat who say it.

To show the esteem in which Mr. Upton Sinclair is held on this side by honest journalists, a magazine with a quarter of a million subscribers in Boston, *Human Life*, congratulates itself on having Mr. Sinclair as a regular subscriber thereto. The *Sun* is hardly worthy of a serious journal's notice, for whatever you see in its leaders is "either 'crow' or not so."

A DISGUSTED BUT NEVER-SAY-DIE AMERICAN.

Bowling Green, New York.

WHERE IS THE BEST ENGLISH SPOKEN?

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—A number of us Englishmen here in the Transvaal wish you, as an authority on the English language, please to tell us where the best English is spoken in the British Isles.

J. UGLOW.

Post Office, East Rand, Transvaal, May 6, 1908.

[We should not like to pretend to give an authoritative answer to this question, but our private conviction is that the best English is spoken on the west coast of Scotland and in parts of Ireland. It sounds paradoxical; but every one knows that the best French is spoken not in Paris, but in certain remote and old-fashioned provincial towns.—ED.]

SHAKESPEARE'S QUARTOS

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—In the current number of the *Library* Mr. Greg questions the printed and accepted dates of certain Shakespeare quartos on various bibliographical grounds. I venture to think that stronger evidence is yet required, on the following grounds.

Mr. Pollard some time ago called attention in *THE ACADEMY* of June 2nd, 1906, to the fact that the quartos in question occur bound together in several collections, and drew the conclusion that Thomas Paviour bought up the "remainders" of some of them, printed a few more, and with some of his own "remainders" made a saleable volume; but he abandons this theory now in favour of Mr. Greg's, that they were all, in spite of the professed dates, reprinted by Paviour in 1619.

His argument is chiefly founded on the similarity of typography, and especially the device of three flowers which appears on all the titles with one exception. I do not think it is necessary for the moment to go very deeply into this; but I may remark in passing that it is not impossible that Roberts may not have got the device at Jones's sale, even if White did buy his business, since White himself never used the device. My main object is to point out that Mr. Greg's strongest argument—that as to the water-marks in the paper—fails entirely.

Mr. Greg alleges that the watermarks in all the quartos—both those professing to be printed in 1600 and those dated 1619—

show the paper to belong to one batch; and since the wires get worn out within one year the paper must have been made about the same time, and it is impossible that Paviour could have got hold of the same batch of paper in 1619 that Roberts used in 1600. I venture to think, however, that if Mr. Greg carefully measures watermarks which appear to the eye to be identical he will find that they are not. To take the "Pot" mark marked "LM," for instance, the first I found in my copies that occurred in (1) "The Merchant of Venice," 1600; (2) "King Lear," 1608; and (3) "Merry Wives," 1619, the measurement of the base at the greatest breadth is in (1) 14mm., in (2) 15.5mm., in (3) 14.5mm.; and there are also variations in the form of the mark itself, which show that the paper in these editions did not come from the same wire.

ALFRED H. HUTH.

CHURCH SCHOOLS' EMERGENCY LEAGUE (MANCHESTER CENTRE)

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—The following resolutions were passed at a meeting of the Committee held at the Diocesan Chambers, Manchester, June 2nd, 1908:—

1. "The Committee, believing that neither the Bill of the Government nor that of the Bishop of St. Asaph affords a basis for a just settlement of the Education question, are of the opinion that both Bills should be withdrawn, or, failing withdrawal, that they should be strenuously opposed."

2. "The Committee cannot agree to any educational settlement which does not provide for the continuance, with full share of public funds, of all schools for which suitable buildings are provided by the Church of England and other religious bodies."

3. "The Committee are of opinion that in all single-school areas the parent should, as far as practicable, be afforded the choice of either denominational or undenominational religious instruction for his child, to be given by teachers duly qualified for that purpose, during school hours."

4. "The Committee consider that a settlement would best be secured, not by the uprooting of the existing system, but by such amendments of the Education Acts as may be necessary for the removal of all real grievances, both of Churchmen and Nonconformists."

5. "The Committee, while accepting the fullest public control over secular education and the expenditure of public money, can never submit to public control of religious instruction in Church Schools, nor accept teachers who may not be tested as to their qualifications to give that instruction."

6. "The Committee are of opinion that, in the event of a National Round-table Conference taking place, the representatives of the Church should be selected by the Consultative Committee of the National Society, which includes persons experienced in the management of Voluntary Schools from every Diocese."

T. E. CLEWORTH, Hon. Secretary.

MINSHEU, MABBE, NICOLETA

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—In THE ACADEMY of February 8th, 1908, I drew attention to the "Modo Breve" of R. de Nicoleta (Bilboa, 1653) as apparently the first attempt at a Baskish Grammar, and the source of the information which was used by Sir T. Browne, the earliest of English Bascophiles. I am informed by Don J. M. de Bernaola, Presbytero, of Durango, in Biscaya, that Sorrarain may have been right in stating in his Bibliography that that author's name occurs as Micoleta in the records of the Church of Santiago at Bilbao (now Bilbao), where he lived. It appears that the house known as Mekolako Borda (the farmhouse of Mekola) was inhabited by a family named Nicola, which points to the possibility of a confusion having taken place about the initial of Nicoleta. It has not, I think, been pointed out that in the "Diálogo Primero," which Nicoleta took from the "Pleasant and Delightful Dialogues in Spanish," bound up with "A Dictionary in Spanish and English" (London, 1623), from the pen of John Minsheu, the words (on p. 29 of the third edition, published at Sevilla, in 1897, before I had seen the original manuscript in the British Museum):

Ay diçe nuestra Madre Çelestina que está corrupta la letra, que por dezir treze diçe tres.
Or diño gure ama Çelestinac dagoala letrea corumpiduric, serren amayrugayti diñoala yrru.

come from p. 106 (really 108) of "The Spanish Bawd represented in Celestina," translated by James Mabbe (Diego Puede-ser = maybe), and published in London in 1631. There the words are:

"Celest. Sonne the phrase is corrupted; they haue put three time (sic), in stead of thirteene." They occur on p. 159 of the edition of Dr. J. Fitzmaurice-Kelly (London, 1894). According to the valuable "Dictionary of National Biography," J. Mabbe lived from 1572 still 1642. He was a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, where a copy of his "Celestina" is preserved, and may have met Minsheu, who was there in 1610. The same authority tells us that Minsheu based his work upon that of Richard Perceval, or Percival (1550-1620), the author of "Bibliotheca Hispanica" (London, 1591). Whether Minsheu composed, or borrowed, his Dialogues I know not; but in the first, translated into fairly good Biscayan by Nicoleta, there is the date 1599. Dr. Fitzmaurice-Kelly tells us in his "History of Spanish Literature" (London, 1898) that "Celestina" was the work of Fernando de Rojas, Alcalde Mayor of Salamanca, and first published in 1499 at Burgos. Many quotations from it have enriched the "English Historical Dictionary" of Oxford; and some others might, with advantage, be added, for instance those illustrating the rare verb "implume"—to pluck, strip, for which one would rather expect "unplume" or "displume." The book was so popular in the sixteenth century that it may have been known, possibly in a French version, to Master W. Shakespeare. At any rate, Mabbe's translation contains at least two phrases which show that Shakespeare was in his mind. It appears that his translation was not in all places literal; and there is other evidence that he admired Shakespeare.

Before leaving the subject of Bascology, suggested by Nicoleta's version of Minsheu's "Diálogo Primero," may I point out two mistakes in the "Discoveries" of Dr. A. E. Drake, as quoted by Dr. Skeat in THE ACADEMY of April 11th, 1908? After twenty-two years' acquaintance with Baskland, and its vanishing old language, I do not know *ola* in the sense of "pole of a hen-roost." It means "argoma, aliaga"—i.e., *furze, gorse*. Nor is *adar* properly a *branch*, but a *horn*—probably first-cousin to Gaelic *adharc*. A *branch* is *abar*, perhaps connected with Gaelic *barr*=*top, summit*. The *branch* of a tree might in poetical style have been called its *horn*, just as the French call the horns of a stag its *bois*=*woods*. But Nicoleta's word for *cuerno*=*horn* is *adar*, and this is still so used in all the Baskish dialects.

On p. 92 of the fourth edition of "The History of the Christian Church," by F. J. Foakes Jackson, B.D. (Cambridge, 1905), one reads: "Both Tertullian and Minucius Felix speak of the *Cantabrum*, or according to some copies *Labarum*, as a Roman standard. Eusebius, in his Life of Constantine, implies that the term had been long in use. Its derivation is obscure; probably it is formed from the Basque word for a standard. The Greek Fathers write it *λαβωρον* or *λαβουρον*." I am not aware that the Basks had any native "word for a standard." Some modern etymologists have tried to explain *λαβωρον* by *lau burnu*, which means four heads, ends, or extremities in good Baskish; but there is no evidence that such a term was used by the Vascones or Iberi under the Roman Empire, either in the sense of a cross or of a military *signum*. The oldest form of *burnu*=*head* was *puru*, as appears from compound words; and the oldest form of *lau* (or *lab* in some dialects) was *laur*. A part of Baskland was known to the Romans as *Cantabria*; but even if *cantabrum* were a correct reading, we have this opinion of Lewis and Short, in their Latin Dictionary: "the connection with *Cantabria* is a mere conjecture." It is more probable that *lābārum* is connected, like the root of *λαμβάνω*, with *lamh*, the old Keltic word for *hand*. *Labur* in Baskish means *short*. That which is *short* is at *hand*. It may be that Latin *lābor*=*handiwork* is also connected with Gaelic *lāmh*, the latter word being used in the phrase *lāmh le* in the sense of "near to." It would be more plausible to connect *laur* with *λαύρα*, if Greek monasteries were originally quadrangles. It may be that some people, finding in the Baskish Dictionary of Aizkibel *laba* translated by "metal candente" = *glowing metal*, have concluded that Italian *lava* is from prehistoric Heuskarian. It is, however, more likely that the Basks, taking *lava* from Italian, pronounced it, in their native way, *laba*, as they have not in their own alphabet the sound of *V*. *Labe* is *oven* in Baskish (not unlike some old forms of loaf), and the inside of a volcano is so like an oven that its product might be called by the same name. *Vesuvi* (the possessive case of *Vesuvius*) happens to mean in Baskish "two fire(s) beneath." It is not, I believe, known whence that volcano got its name. Nor do we know how old the Baskish language may be, nor in what regions it may have been spoken two or three thousand years ago. Mr. A. E. A. Fremantle, B.A. of University College, Oxford, thought that *lava* was to be connected with *λίβη*, *kettle*, from the same root as *λεῖψω*, *libo*. It occurred to me that it might be akin, if not to *labe*, at least to *labai*—Baskish for *slippery*, which is like Latin *lābor*. But etymologies are as slippery ground as ice. Let us leave them with our skates!

EDWARD S. DODGSON.

The Union Society, Oxford, May 30, 1908.

ELFETA

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR—Chaucer tells us that Cambyuskan

Hadde two sones on Elfeta his wyf

("Canterbury Tales," F. 29.) *Elfeta* is the spelling of the Hengwrt MS., the peculiar importance of which Professor Skeat has pointed out in his "The Evolution of the Canterbury Tales" (Chaucer Society, 1907; for the issue of 1903), of Cambridge Manuscript Dd. 4.24, and of Bodleian 686. Until recently I have been disposed to regard *Elfeta* as a feminine diminutive of *Elf*, coined by Chaucer, and Cambyuskan as one of a large number of heroes of romance who wedded fairies. Very lately, however, I have observed that in Skeat's edition of Chaucer's "Astrolabe" (Chaucer Society, 1872) certain star-lists on pp. xxxvii.-xlv. give to their 29th star the name *Elfeta* or *Alfeta*. I think this star-name is far more likely to be the source of the name of Cambyuskan's Queen, but have not the means of further inquiry. Will anybody inform me whether *Algarsyf*, the son of Cambyuskan, was also named for a star?

HENRY BARRETT HINCKLEY.

Northampton, Mass., May 21, 1908.

THE HOME SECRETARY AND THE LASH

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—The lash has gone very much out of favour with the public of late years, but I fear that public officers like the Home Secretary do not always sufficiently consult the wishes of their employers: the public, and, unfortunately, under our present system, the members of a Ministry hang together, and the public cannot turn out one without turning out all, which they may not wish to do. And the present Home Secretary is not the only holder of that office who often speaks and writes as if he were the servant of an absolute monarch rather than of the public—though he usually yields to public opinion when strongly expressed.

Flogging, however, has many advocates who are virulent and noisy, and clamour for applying the lash to prisoners who are now exempt from it. I do not believe that their numbers are at all proportioned to the space which they occupy in the Press. Allegation is their forte, but they are not particular about proof. Indeed, as regards the vaunted successes of the cat and the birch, the particulars given are often so defective that their opponents cannot find out what cases they alluded to. As regards flogging Judges they never try the cat without a considerable addition of imprisonment or penal servitude; and though the statute may require such a sentence in addition to the flogging, the Judge could make the imprisonment as short as he pleased, and would no doubt make it short if he really relied on the cat to effect a cure. But on comparing the sentences of Mr. Justice Lawrence with, for example, those of Sir John Day, we cannot fail to notice the reduction in the number of strokes without any similar reduction in the accompanying term of imprisonment. Flogging Judges seem to be losing faith in the favourite remedy, whatever their admirers may say to the contrary. Indeed, Mr. Justice Lawrence implied that he passed these sentences not with a view to any beneficial result, but in order to show his sympathy with the victims! The assigning of such a reason for passing these sentences ought, I think, to have led a public officer to reconsider them carefully. But this is not all. Flogging under the antiquated Vagrant Act of 1824 (which never extended to either Ireland or Scotland) still goes on, although more than one Home Secretary has declared his disapproval of it. If the question of its continuance were submitted to the present House of Commons there would, I believe, be an enormous majority against it; but the Home Secretary is too busy with his scheme of "indefinite sentences" for "habituals" to redress this crying evil, or even to give general directions to his subordinates to remit all sentences passed under a section which he cannot find time to repeal. Then there is flogging for breaches of prison discipline after a secret inquiry before the Visiting Justices, the precise nature of the offence and the evidence given in proof of it never being made known to the public. The system would suit Russia better than England. But there is this difference between it and the other flogging sentences to which I have referred—the others are carried out unless the Home Secretary intervenes; this one cannot be carried out without his approval. In a recent return it would seem that the approval was given in sixty-seven cases out of seventy. Whether the three remissions were made on the merits or on medical grounds I do not know, but at all events there must have been either a wonderfully efficient tribunal of the first instance

or a wonderfully inefficient tribunal of appeal. One would wish to know what kind of report of the proceedings was placed before the Home Secretary before deciding, and whether the prisoner had any opportunity of being heard. But some officials seem to think that if the decision is deferred for some time the public will give them credit for having given the case a full consideration, though perhaps they never had sufficient information to arrive at an intelligent conclusion.

A BARRISTER.

BOOKS RECEIVED

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- Muirhead, Lewis A. *The Terms Life and Death in the Old and New Testaments*. Melrose, 3s. net.
 Anglican Liberalism. By Twelve Churchmen. Williams and Norgate, 5s.

POETRY

- The Epic of London*. By Rowbotham (the Modern Homer). Gibbings, n.p.
Balmy Springtime. Written and Illustrated by Gordon S. Maxwell. Gay and Hancock, 1s. net.
 Thirlmere, Rowland. *Mont St. Michel, and Other Poems*. Allen, n.p.
 Woods, Litchfield. *The Dead Friendship, and Other Poems*. Glasgow: Frederick Wilson, n.p.

REPRINTS AND NEW EDITIONS.

- Shakspeare, William. *Poems, Songs, and Sonnets*. Sisleys, 1s. net.
 Mill, John Stuart. *Auguste Comte and Positivism*. Routledge, 1s. net.
 Dickens, Charles. *Seven Poor Travellers*. Sisleys.
 Burns, Robert. *Tam O'Shanter, and Other Poems*. Sisleys.
 Addison, Joseph. *Sir Roger de Coverley*. Sisleys.
 Thackeray, William Makepeace. *Notes of a Week's Holiday*. Sisleys.
 Hunt, Leigh. *Coaches and Coaching*. Sisleys.
 Molière, J. B. Poquelin. *Dépit Amoureux*. Dent, 1s. 6d. net.
 Dickens, Charles. *Miscellaneous Papers, Plays, and Poems*. In Two Vols. Chapman and Hall, 12s.
 "Everyman's Library (Dent, 1s. net):
 Burke, Edmund. *Speeches and Letters on American Affairs*.
 Poe, E. A. *Tales of Mystery and Imagination*.
 Packman, Francis. *Montcalm and Wolf*. In Two Vols.
 Manning, Anne. *Mary Powell and Deborah's Diary*.
Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson.
Life and Writings of Benjamin Franklin.
 Converse, Florence. *Long Will*.

FICTION

- Annesley, Maude. *The Door of Darkness*. Lane, 6s.
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 Smart, Mrs. Irwin. *One Life and the Next*. Sisleys, 6s.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Mysteries of Mithra; A Mithraic Ritual; The Gnostic Crucifixion; Chaldean Oracles, I. and II.* By G. R. S. Mead. The Theosophical Publishing Society, 1s. and 2s. 6d. net.
King-Predestinate. By Michael Wood. The Theosophical Publishing Society, 1s. net.
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